

Radio and Indigenous Peoples



The Role of Radio in the Sustainable livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples;
A Case Study of the Rakhaing and the Garo People of Bangladesh.



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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tromsø
Norway
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ABSTRACT

Sustainable livelihood means to live with the close harmony without losing ecosystem both in economical, social, environmental and cultural elements. Or other ways we can say live without the degradation of economical, social, environmental and cultural elements of an indigenous group is sustainable livelihood. Radio has the strong role in the sustainable livelihood of indigenous people.

Mother language is the most powerful instrument of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. Promoting the recognition and practice of mother language media, especially radio, has its distinctive role. Radio is the cheapest and easiest, strongest and personal medium that can be useful every moment of a person's life, though he/she is at works. So the radio has an impact on the indigenous people's sustainable livelihood.

'*Sal Gittal*' is one of the programme broadcast from Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka for the Garo people. Within last thirty years they have had enormous benefit like lyricists, singers, artists come from them, they could present their language and culture in the national radio, which gives them inspiration to protect and flourish their culture and heritage. On the other hand Rakhaing, has no radio programme of their own. So their language and culture has no significant development, even diminishing day by day. Some of the Rakhaing people are now trying to retrieve their language, culture and heritage. Study findings showed that the Rakhaing feel them excluded from the world; and only a single programme in radio can give them a feeling of being a member of the world.

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VIII

Glossary:

Adibashi	=	This word is used for Indigenous/Minority peoples in many parts of Indo-Pak sub continent. Bangladesh also uses this word.
Baishaki Purnima	=	Religious festival of Buddhist people. Maghi Punima, Probarana Purnima is also the festivals for them.
Jana or Nengti	=	Narrow pieces of cloth around the waist, Normally Garo people wear this as a dress.
Lungi and Fotua	=	Both are Burmese words. One kind of dress put on by Rakhaing men. Also Bangali people wear this dress alternative to pants and shirts.
Palagan	=	Series of songs sung by different people one after another. One kind of folk song.
Para	=	A cluster of houses is called Para, Part of a village; a bengali word.
Pyre	=	Wooden frame or box made for carrying dead body.
Rakkha	=	In Pali language it means “conservation”.
Shraddha	=	Shraddha or obsequies, is the Hindu ritual of treating people to feasts in the name of the deceased.
Thabine	=	One kinds of dress, Rakhaing women usually put on.
Thana	=	In Bangla language Police Station is named or called as Thana.
Tribe	=	This word is used for Indigenous/Minority people in many parts of Indo-Pak sub continent by the British during their rules. The peoples who were treated as tribe did not like this word. Rather they preferred ethnic minorities.
Upazilla	=	Sub-District; Where district is the administrative unit of the country. There are 64 districts in Bangladesh. Districts are divided into several sub-districts, called Upazilla. In Bangla zilla means districts and Upazilla means subdistricts.

Abbreviations:

Sl No.	Abbreviations	Elaborations
01	ADB	= Asian Development Bank
02	BB	= Bangladesh Betar
03	BBC	= British Broadcasting Corporation
04	CHT	= Chittagong Hill Tracts
05	DFID	= Department of Foreign and International Development
06	FM	= Frequency Modulus
07	ILO	= International Labour Organization
08	IMLD	= International Mother Language Day
09	MDG	= Millennium Development Goal
10	NBA	= National Broadcasting Authority
11	NID	= National Immunization Day
12	NRK	= Norsk rikskringkasting (Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation)
13	PRSP	= Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
14	RAB	= Rapid Action Battalion
15	RDF	= Rakhaing Development Foundation
16	UNESCO	= United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
17	UNICEF	= United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
18	UNIC	= United Nations Information Center
19	UNO	= Upazila Nirabahi Officer: (Upazila Executive officer; Administrative head of a sub district)



Map-1 Bangladesh in Asia and in the world

CHAPTER- 1

INTRODUCTION

Abstract: Mother language is the most powerful instrument of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. Promoting the recognition and practice of mother language media, especially radio, has its unique role. Among the media radio is the cheapest and easiest, and personal medium that can be useful every moment of a person's life, though he/she works. Same way radio has an impact on the indigenous people's sustainable livelihood. Sustainability is a systemic concept, relating to the continuity of economic, social, institutional and environmental aspects of human society.

The Garo, an indigenous group living in the northern region of Bangladesh, have their own radio programme broadcasted in their native language once a week. The programme was encouraged by the government with the decision in 1976 to produce the native language programme 'Sal Gittal' (The New Sun). The Garo write and produce the programme entirely themselves while a government appointed producer verbalizes the government's policies through the programme. The Garo have had their own language radio programme for about 30 years, focusing on issues relevant to their daily life which have benefited them enormously.

Another indigenous group, the Rakhaing who live in the southern coastal region of Bangladesh, has no radio programme in their native language. The Rakhaing are poor and marginalized people who could benefit from the introduction of a native language radio programme with a focus on issues specifically relevant to them.

It was obvious from my fieldwork that access to native language radio programmes affects the well being of a group of people. My research will focus on these two indigenous groups, Garo and Rakhaing, and the effects the radio programmes have on their sustainable livelihood.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE THESIS

1.1.1: Childhood memory of oral history:

Childhood memories of oral storytelling have a strong influence on a child's thought patterns and therefore, on a person's life. I was born and grew up in the district of Patuakhali where the Rakhaing people mainly live. In my early years I listened to various different oral stories of the Rakhaing people and found it interesting to learn about them.

Later, I studied at the Bangladesh Agricultural University in Mymensingh. It was far from my birthplace and from the Rakhaing people, but close to the Garo people. One of my friends, Subarna Cisim, from the Garo group studied with me and through him I became interested in learning about the Garo as well.

My job as a programme organizer for the farm broadcasting unit of Bangladesh Betar (Radio Bangladesh) in Dhaka and the opportunities it gave me to visit and interview people from both these groups about agricultural farming, enhanced my previous interest in learning about them. These reasons gave me the focus to organize this thesis. Moreover, the UNESCO conference on “*Knowledge in the Next Generation; Major Challenges Regarding the Sustainability of Indigenous Cultures*” hosted by the University of Tromsø, Norway in 2004, expedited my decision. My working and practical knowledge regarding indigenous programme broadcasting from Bangladesh Betar helped me to contrast the two groups. Of them, one group has had its own programme since 1976 and other group has not yet launched on a broadcasting programme.

1.1.2: Theoretical Perspectives

Radio plays a very powerful role in modern life. It is the cheapest medium for easy access information, it is portable and one can listen while performing many tasks including working. It has the power to reach people in any corner of the world within a short time. In any emergency or natural disaster like a tsunami, radio becomes the most vital source of information. It also plays an important role in the daily affairs of the local and global community. Hence the role of radio in modern society cannot be underestimated. In Bangladesh there are strong oral traditions, which maintain important values in social life. Radio can easily promote these oral traditions to people of all levels and status.

‘As a tool of communication, the mother language has a powerful role in the formation of the individual, and is “the most powerful instrument of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage.” In recognition of this phenomenon UNESCO followed up the proclamation of the International Mother Language Day by promulgating the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in November 2001. Protection of traditional knowledge of

indigenous peoples and combating illicit traffic in cultural goods and services are some of the several aims of this declaration'¹.

Language is at the heart of humanity's intangible heritage. UNESCO's goal on the eve of International Mother Language Day² 2004 was to protect the world's oral histories to revitalize the rich cultural diversities present in the world through its educational and cultural programmes and promote languages as a means of communication and interaction. Promoting the recognition and practice of mother language media, especially radio, has its own unique role.

Indigenous people traditionally live in the remotest areas of a country. Newspapers and other print media are usually out of their reach and television is too costly for most indigenous people to afford. However, radio can promote native language in an easy and acceptable way in all spheres of life. For indigenous people, the indigenous language radio programmes are a very welcome contribution to the notion of promoting native language.

'Radio can promote traditional knowledge that acquired and preserved through generations in an original or local society, which consists of experience in working to secure subsistence form of nature'³.

By promoting traditional knowledge through a consistent flow of information in a mother tongue, radio performs a vital role in the sustainable livelihoods of indigenous people. Sustainability⁴ is a systemic concept, relating to the continuity of economic, social, institutional and environmental aspects of human society. It is intended to be a means of configuring civilization and human activity. Society, its members and its economies are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present, while at the same time being able to preserve biodiversity and natural ecosystems and plan for and act towards maintaining these ideals indefinitely. Sustainability affects every level of organization, from the local neighbourhood to the entire planet.

According to the Stockholm Environment Institute⁵ (SEI) sustainable livelihoods are;

¹ Message from H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan, President of the Fifty-Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly as on 21 February 2003.

² See box-1

³ Nils Jernsletten: Sami Traditional Terminology PP. 86

⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainability>

⁵ <http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/sei/sustainability/livelihoods/def.html>

'the creation of conditions that are (self-)supportive of sustainable development in human, natural and economic systems, which, whilst safeguarding resources and opportunities for future generations, provides individuals with means to provide themselves with food, shelter and an acceptable quality of life.....'

The definition used by the United Kingdom's Department of Foreign and International Development (DFID) incorporates the following sentiments;

'A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base' (Chambers, R. and G. Conway, 1992)⁶.

Sustainable livelihood requires that information on the use of resources is understood and practiced by the people. Radio is capable of sending an unremitting flow of information through broadcast messages in different formats to different kinds of people. Therefore, radio plays a strong role in the sustainable livelihoods of indigenous people.

Box-1: - INTERNATIONAL MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY

UNESCO's General Conference proclaimed International Mother Language Day in November 1999 and it has been observed every year since February 2000 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.

Languages are the most powerful instruments for preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. All moves to promote the dissemination of mother tongues will serve not only to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingual education, but also to develop fuller awareness of linguistic and cultural traditions throughout the world and to inspire solidarity based on understanding, tolerance and dialogue.

This day of celebration was conceived in Bangladesh on February 21, 1952, when students of Bangladesh shed their blood for the Bangla language. Since then, the day has been celebrated every year in Bangladesh and is known as '*Shahid Dibash*'. It became the International Mother Language Day in 2000.

⁶ Adapted from Chambers, R. and G. Conway (1992) 'Sustainable rural livelihoods: Practical concepts for the 21st century'. IDS Discussion Paper 296. Brighton: IDS.

1.2 COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

Media deliver messages that allow the recipients to have emotions, opinions and ideas, as well as being an interactive way to inform, educate and entertain. Shannon and Weaver's *Mathematical Theory of Communication* (1949; Weaver, 1949b) is widely accepted as one of the main seeds out of which communication studies have grown. It is a clear example of the process in which communication is the transmission of messages. This basic model of communication is presented as a simple linear process.

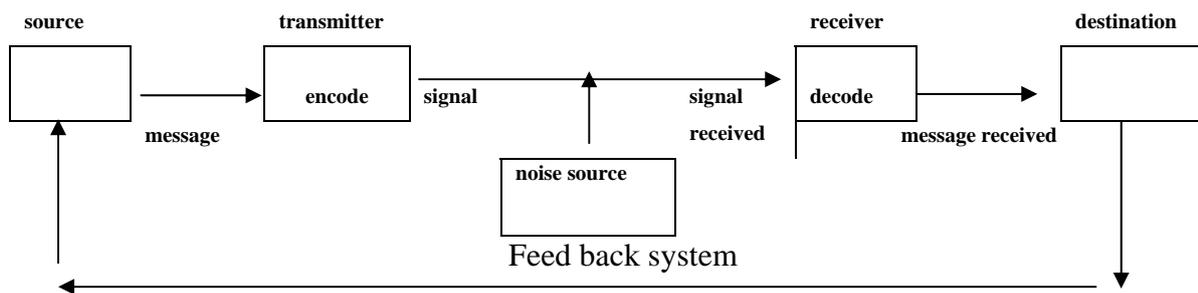


Figure 1: Shannon and Weaver's Model of communication⁷

According to Figure 1, messages are transmitted to the destination by the media source. Message encoding and decoding are technical parts in the process while the noise source in radio plays an important part. This figure is used to familiarize producers of radio programmes with the basic process of communication. When we were trained for radio programme production at both home and abroad, I remember being constantly told to ask myself; "*Where is the noise source?*" All kinds of decisions force the radio producer consider the noise source for its contents, music and programme format. *Feedback* is a concept that Shannon and Weaver did not use, but is one that later media workers have found to be useful. *Feedback* is the transmission of the receiver's reaction back to the sender. This basic figure with the addition of a feedback system enables the radio producer to adjust the programme where and when necessary. Programme for indigenous people with proper feedback system make the programme very much livelihood oriented.

⁷ Fiske, John. 2004; pp-7 and 29

Shannon and Weaver also identify three levels of problems in the study of communication.

These are:

Level A (Technical problems)	How accurately can the symbols of communication be transmitted?
Level B (Semantic problems)	How precisely do the transmitted symbols convey the desired meanings?
Level C (Effectiveness problems)	How effectively does the received meaning affect conduct in the desired way?

My thesis will consider the above-mentioned problem Level C with regard to the effectiveness of indigenous radio programme broadcasting.

1.3 ROLE OF MEDIA:

Media is no longer limited; escaping from it would be difficult in this age of information. We do not need to go far to find it in our day-to-day life. Even within the home, media has reshaped the social significance of individual rooms. At one time, parents had the ability to discipline a child by sending the child to his or her room - a form of ex-communication from social interaction. Such an action takes on a whole new meaning today if the child's room is linked to the outside world through television, radio, telephone and computer.⁸

Electronic forms of communication are a special type of media in which messages are encoded as electronic signals, transmitted, and then decoded. The telegraph, telephone, radio and television are examples of electronic media. These media are worthy of special study, not only because they are recent innovations that are used almost universally, but also because they have unique physical characteristics that have significant sociological implications. The nature of the electronic signal allows it to be rapidly transmitted through wire or air, and the form of the message often resembles 'real' face-to-face communication. As a result, communication can easily bypass many former physical barriers to information flow. Interaction (emotions, feelings and ideas) can take place without regard to traditionally defined social situations⁹.

Due to all kinds of media the world is becoming smaller. Messages are transmitted across large distances with relative ease so that individuals have ready access to information and communication originating from distant sources. Within a few seconds the world can know what is happening around the globe, thus affecting reactions and imparting knowledge.

⁸ Meyrowitz, Joshua 1985; preface

⁹ Ibid:pp-332

It was Marconi who successfully transmitted signals across 23 km of sea in 1898, and 1899 he also transmitted signals across the English Channel. He subsequently developed radiobroadcasting systems from 1920. Television started from the late 1940's, together radio and television made launched the era of information. The development and exploitation of these various technologies were intermingled in complex ways with economic, political and coercive powers¹⁰. One cannot help but think of these media developments living in the modern world. Mass media not only reflects society, but also has the ability to influence and change society and the minds of the people. It is an established fact today that mass media effects our lives.

According to Thompson¹¹ the development of communication media has fuelled a growing awareness of the very interconnectedness and interdependency which this development has helped to create. It has nourished a sense of responsibility. It could form part of a new kind of moral practical reflection that has broken free from the anthropocentric and spatial-temporal limitations of the traditional conception of ethics, a kind of reflection, which might stand in some tolerably coherent relation to the realities of an increasingly interconnected world.

When studying history in the early ages, we knew only of the kings or sultans that ruled the world. The common people had no relationship with their rulers and even the rulers did not bother with the general populace. However, nowadays any newly elected president or prime minister of a country is known about all over the world within a few moments through media. In addition, this knowledge can be related to and discussed by all manner of people. Every corner of the world can be reached through all modes of media. Among them, radio is the easiest, fastest and cheapest of all to produce and receive. Radio is one of the strongest electronic media sources in changing human behaviour. It can be said that man has conquered distance through radio. Radio can transmit messages from one end of the world to the other within a moment. Radio has played a significantly vital role in converting the whole world into a single global village (See box-2). For any groups of indigenous people, radio can easily allow them to explore the world within the shortest possible time and at a low cost, whereas other media cannot.

¹⁰ Thompson, John .B 1995:pp-79

¹¹ Ibid; pp: -264-65

Box-2¹²: - GLOBAL VILLAGE

Global village is a term coined by P. Wyndham Lewis in his book *America and Cosmic Manóif*. However, Marshall McLuhan also wrote about this term in his book *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. His book describes how electronic mass media collapse space and time barriers in human communication, enabling people to interact and live on a global scale. In this sense, the globe has been turned into a village by the electronic mass media.

Today, the global village is mostly used as a metaphor to describe the internet and World Wide Web. The Internet globalizes communication by allowing users from around the world to connect with each other. Similarly, web-connected computers enable people to link their web sites together. This new reality has implications for forming new sociological structures within the context of culture.

1.4 TYPES OF MEDIA

Media¹³ is the technical or physical means of converting a message into a signal capable of being transmitted along a channel. Media can be divided into three main categories.

1. Presentational media: the voice, the face and the body. They use the natural language of spoken words, expressions, gestures, and so on. They require the presence of the communicator for he or she is the medium.
2. Representational media: books, paintings, photographs, writing, architecture, interior decorating, gardening etc.
3. Mechanical media: telephones, radio, television, telex and so on.

The main distinction between categories 2 and 3 is that media in 3 use channels created by engineering and are thus subject to greater technological constraints and are more affected by Level-A (*Para* 1.2) noise than those in category 2.

According to John Fiske¹⁴, people tended to use newspapers, radio and television to connect themselves to society, but used books and films to escape from reality for a while. The better-educated tended to use print media; those with less education were inclined towards electronic and visual media.

¹² Global village - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia; Retrieved as on 17th April 2006 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_village

¹³ Fiske, John. 2004; pp-18

¹⁴ Ibid; pp-190

1.5 RADIO AS A MEDIUM:

Radio is often described as the "captive electronic medium" because it reaches people while they are doing other things - in their cars, on the way to and from work, in their homes and offices, even while they exercise with a Walkman¹⁵.

An interview I had with a popular Member of Parliament (MP) in Bangladesh went something like this: He willingly stated without my asking; "I do not listen to the radio. My driver listens". I asked him what he does during his commuting time; he smiled and said, "Oh, I also listen during this time". I ventured, "Do you get more time to watch television than to listen to the radio?" He laughed loudly and said that he didn't. Then suddenly he said, "Yes, I listen to the radio".

This underestimation and overlooking happens all over the world whether it is in developed or developing countries. The importance of radio has not decreased; instead it has increased with many new dimensions for all kinds of people; educated, non-educated, indigenous and non-indigenous, rural and urban. I found people walking, jogging, running and cycling wearing radio headphones, listening to the radio as they went. I have also seen this in England and in Norway. If we are to consider the significance of the various types of media for the indigenous people; the most entertaining tool and popular medium is television; the most permanent medium are those of print; the most accessible medium is the radio. Additionally, radio is a medium of linguistic and cultural continuity and at times, of survival.¹⁶ Radio is congenial medium for indigenous language groups as it is based on oral and aural communication. It enables users of those languages to communicate without recourse to the printed word.

1.6 INDIGENOUS BROADCAST IN THE WORLD:

Indigenous people are more inclined towards electronic media, especially radio. According to the Brundtland report in 1987¹⁷, some communities – so called indigenous or tribal peoples – remain isolated because of such factors as physical barriers to communication or marked differences in social and cultural practices. The isolation of many such peoples has meant the

¹⁵ www.kctcs.net/newspublications/stylebook/mediatypes.htm. This was a study subjected to 'working with the media' in America.

¹⁶ Valerie Alia and Simone Bull, 2005: pp-108

¹⁷ In 1987 the United Nations Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) drew attention to the fact that economic development often leads to deterioration, not an improvement, in the quality of people's lives.

preservation of a traditional way of life in close harmony with the natural environment. Their very survival has depended on their ecological awareness and adaptation. But their isolation has also meant that few of them have shared in national economic and social development; this may be reflected in their poor health, nutrition, and education. These communities are the repositories of vast accumulations of traditional knowledge and experience that links humanity with its ancient origins¹⁸. Radio as a medium can help them to come forward into the mainstream of the whole world.

Localized radio and television that include indigenous dialects and cultural mixes make for successful communication within the indigenous groups and allows their value's systems to diffuse within the localities. The first indigenous broadcasts in North America were on Alaskan radio in 1930s, but despite Alaska's nearly thirty-year head start, Canada is the world leader in indigenous broadcasting¹⁹. The British developed specific British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) units for Scotland (1932)²⁰. Norway experimented irregularly with programmes in Sami (Lapp) starting from 1934 and later developed a regularly scheduled Sami service in 1946 for the northernmost region of the country. Finland followed suit a year later. Iraq introduced a Kurdish language service in 1939²¹.

Most indigenous media / radio stations were established with a strong sense of purpose as represented by the following list²²:

1. To 'rescue' the language, chiefly by using it in daily broadcasts but also perhaps by direct language instruction.
2. To increase a sense of self-esteem on the part of the indigenous population, both in their historical traditions and in their achievements in contemporary society.
3. To combat the negative images of indigenous peoples held by the majority of the population.
4. To work for a greater degree of cohesiveness among indigenous peoples, often so as to develop greater political influence locally, regionally, and nationally.
5. To provide a visible and audible symbol of indigenous society so that both indigenous and majority cultures would be aware of each other.

¹⁸ Brundtland report 1987, pp:114-115

¹⁹ Ibid: pp-107.

²⁰ Donald R. Browne; 1996: pp-15

²¹ Ibid:pp-15

²² Ibid; pp-59

6. To provide an outlet for the creative production of, for example, indigenous singers, instrumentalists and poets.
7. To provide another source of employment for the indigenous community.

1.7 INDIGENOUS BROADCASTING IN BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh, radio is the most important source of information for the indigenous people. There are 45 groups²³ of ethnic minority / indigenous peoples in Bangladesh. Bangladesh Betar (Radio Bangladesh) has twelve regional stations throughout the country. Every station has operated one or more daily or weekly radio programmes for these ethnic minorities since 1976. Two out of twelve regional stations have been established in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh where people of ethnic minorities are more concentrated. Therefore, radio maintains a strong role in their sustainable livelihoods. Bangladesh was the role model for the conceptualisation of *International Mother Language Day* and the decision of the Bangladesh government to produce radio programmes for the indigenous people in their own languages is particularly noteworthy (see interview of DDG; *Para 4.7*). This study consolidates the significant role of radio in the sustainable livelihoods of the Rakhaing and the Garo people in Bangladesh.

1.8 OBJECTIVES

1.8.1 To establish the present situation in Bangladesh Betar of indigenous people's programmes:

My fieldwork and research has found the socio-cultural effects of the radio programmes in the indigenous people's subsistence and sustainable livelihood. The 12 regional radio stations of Bangladesh Betar are; Bangladesh Betar Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Sylhet, Rangamati, Cox's Bazar, Thakurgaon, Barisal, Bandharban and Comilla. Bangladesh Betar, Rangamati and Bandharban are situated inside the core area of indigenous people. All programmes broadcast from these two stations are entirely for indigenous people. Other stations have one or more daily or weekly programmes for indigenous people in the same manner that '*Sal Gittal*' is broadcast from Bangladesh Betar Dhaka.

²³ IWGIA, the Indigenous World 2004, pp 290.

1.8.2 To establish the contrast of the effect the radio programmes have between the Rakhaing and the Garo groups:

The Garo people live mainly the northern part of Bangladesh under greater Mymensingh (see box-4) and Tangail districts. Bangladesh Betar Dhaka broadcasts a weekly radio programme named ‘*Sal Gittal*’ for the Garo people and has done so since 1976. It is self-evident that they transmit their knowledge through their language. Programme assistants are indigenous people from the same ethnic group. The programme hosts and the contributing artists are from among the Garo. The whole programme is organized and performed by people from the same indigenous group. According to the programme assistants, it is a very popular programme in their community. The Garo people, having stopped all other activities, usually sit together and listen to the programme (See picture 9). My interviews with them indicate that they accept the programme as part of their daily existence. Besides their own programme, they also listen to many other radio programmes.

The Rakhaing live in the southern part of Bangladesh under the districts of Patuakhali and Barguna (See box-3). The Rakhaing people have radio coverage from Bangladesh Betar Barisal, Bangladesh Betar Khulna and Bangladesh Betar Dhaka. However, the Rakhaing have no programme in their native language.

Although the Garo have such a programme, the Rakhaing receive the coverage of three radio centers and the Garo only one. Therefore, it is easy to find the contrasting effects of the radio programmes between these two groups.

1.8.3 To find socio-cultural effects of the native language radio programmes in the indigenous people’s subsistence and sustainable livelihood:

A renowned media specialist, David Morley²⁴, said that media products have direct and necessary cultural effects on those who consume them. If indigenous people can transmit their indigenous knowledge using media, then the effects on them should be significantly evident. Since 1976 programmes have been broadcasted for indigenous people in their native languages. They are involved in its production from beginning to end, therefore, affecting their daily sustainable life. My observations reveal that the programme for the Garo has a lot of positive outcomes, but it has become traditional in its nature with very few developments since its conception.

²⁴ David Morley: pp-126

CHAPTER - 2

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Abstract: Bangladesh Betar played an important role in the independence of Bangladesh and it has continued to develop its infrastructure and programme range since independence. There are many dimensions within the definition of “indigenous people” in the world. Especially notable is that the indigenous groups of Asia have been excluded from many of these definitions. The government of Bangladesh also does not recognize these groups as indigenous, but rather as ‘ethnic minorities’. However, the Rakhaing and Garo have all the necessary attributes to be identified as indigenous people; historical background, language, cultural beliefs, rituals, dress, and different types of livelihoods. They also are known as an indigenous people by other people.

Before describing the role of radio in the sustainable livelihoods of indigenous people in Bangladesh, this chapter will give a brief description of Bangladesh Betar, its important historical role in the war of independence, the historical development of its infrastructure (technical) and in programme contents, format and policies. I will also discuss the latest situation regarding the programming for indigenous people, the definition of indigenous people and the position of indigenous people in the eye of the government of the Bangladesh. In addition I will give a brief description of the Rakhaing and the Garo people.

2.1 BANGLADESH BETAR (Radio Bangladesh)

Bangladesh Betar is the official name of ‘Radio Bangladesh’. The then British government decided to set up five medium wave radio stations in Karachi, Lakhnow, Dhaka, and Peshawar to promote British government policy and to inform British soldiers against Nazi groups during the world war in 1939²⁵. Bangladesh Betar (BB) started its broadcasting in Dhaka on 16th December 1939²⁶. The first radio station in Eastern Bengal was situated in a house on Nazimuddin Road (See picture 10), now an older part of the capital city of Bangladesh. In 1947 the radio centre became part of the Pakistan Broadcasting Service and, in 1948 it was hence named ‘Radio Pakistan, Dhaka’. The centre moved to a new building located in Shahabagh on February 8, 1960. This was a specially constructed building for radio broadcasting. On 16th December 1971, after a long, serious and bloody fight, East Pakistan became the new country of Bangladesh²⁷.

²⁵ A profile, External service, Radio Bangladesh; pp11-12

²⁶ Ibid pp 12

²⁷ Ibid pp 12

2.1. 1 Role of Radio in the Liberation war

Radio Bangladesh has the unique distinction of having been associated with the liberation of the country from Pakistan's occupation as on March 26, 1971. It put on air the historical proclamation of the independence of Bangladesh. During those days of turmoil, seventy five million people depended on radio broadcasts emanating from the clandestine station for the latest information on the war for liberation. The radio programmes, which were against Pakistan's military occupation, gave the freedom fighters and the people of Bangladesh the vital force and inspiration to continue their plight. These rebellious emancipation broadcasts gave it the name of "*Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra*" (*Free Bangladesh Radio*). This name for the radio station remained until December 16, 1971 when it became "Bangladesh Betar". This year, 2006, Bangladesh Betar received the "Swadhinata Padak" "Independence Award Gold Medal"²⁸ for its supreme role in the war of independence and for its present role in the development of Bangladesh²⁹.

2.1. 2 Increase the number of radio stations and covering area

On July 30, 1983, Radio Bangladesh Dhaka moved into a modernized and spacious building equipped with high-tech facilities in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka (see Picture 1). In the beginning the area of coverage for radio was only within 40-45 mile radius. However, on 13th May 1963, two-thirds of the total area of Bangladesh came under its broadcasting service. This was achieved by setting up 100 KW medium wave transmitters in Dhaka. In the same year, the increase in technical facilities permitted the introduction of two additional medium wave channels, "A (ka)" and "B (Kha)". Bangladesh Betar Chittagong and Rajshahi were established in 1963. Sylhet Betar started relaying in 1961 and became a complete station in 1967 with Bangladesh Betar Rangpur. On 4th December 1970, before independence, Khulna Betar was the last station to begin programme broadcasting. The Shabagh building serves as the National Broadcasting Authority (NBA) with transmission facilities for External Services, Transcription Services, and Commercial Services and of late, for BBC transmission on FM band, which began from May 1, 1994, for a daily broadcast of about 10 hours 45 minutes. Later, from independence and up until 2005, Bangladesh Betar, Thakurgaon, Rangamati, Barisal and Cox's Bazar also became established. Bangladesh Betar, Bandarban are broadcasting experimentally on air and Comilla are relaying from Dhaka.

²⁸ The highest civilian national award for contributing to Bangladesh society, this year Bangladesh Betar was awarded this honoured along with Rapid Action Batalian RAB.

²⁹Betar Bangla; Page 5-6: Issue No 83, Year 33, Baishakh 1413, 14th April-14th May 2006. Special feature: Bangladesh Betar has been awarded "Swadhinata Award 2006" we are proud we are happy.

2.1.3 Radio programmes:

Bangladesh Betar (BB) is the combined effort of different units, all of which make it possible to achieve the dignity and status, it desires. Bangladesh Betar is divided into four ‘wings’ that work together to make the station a success. They are independent yet complementary to each other for the interest of the institution. The four wings are; (a) Programme Wing (b) Engineering Wing (c) News Wing and (d) Administration Wing. This thesis will mainly describe the Programme Wing in relation to the research questions.

In the beginning, Bangladesh Betar was just a broadcasting centre, which later became a complete station under the Pakistan Broadcasting Service. Despite its lack of programming material, its broadcasting history from 1939 to 1947 was highly remarkable and memorial. It was able to establish popularity by broadcasting the ill influences of World War II, the non-cooperation movement of India against the British Empire, political chaos, the advancing colonial movement, famine and so on. Although it began by only broadcasting news bulletins, after few years it became possible to start programme broadcasting. Subsequent government policy and propaganda radio aided the development of programmes from the beginning of sixties. “Buniadi Ganotanter Asor”, a rural based radio programme, started broadcasting shortly after the proclamation of military rule by Mr. Ayub Khan on 7th October 1958. The aim of this programme was to regain the trust of the people³⁰ and it became a very popular programme among the rural people.

The medium wave channels “A (ka)” and “B (Kha)”, introduced in 1963 after increasing the technical facilities of the centre, allowed for new stations to become established, thus broadening the range and number of new programmes. A 1000 KW high power medium wave transmitter was added in 1976, this significantly increased the overall broadcasting area of Bangladesh Betar Dhaka. The area of programme coverage has since extended into many parts of India, Myanmar, Thailand and China. In addition, the number of hours of programme broadcasting has extended from only a few hours during its conception to 160 hrs per day in 1976. Currently, Bangladesh Betar broadcasts 183.5³¹ hrs of programmes daily and about 76% of the people of Bangladesh listen to the programmes of Bangladesh Betar.

³⁰ Bangladesh Betar er 25 basor (25 year of Bangladesh Betar); PP18

³¹ Counted from Betar Bangla, Published from Betar Prokashana Daptar, Bangladesh Betar, Shere-e-Bangla Nagor, Dhaka-1215. 16 Aug-15 September; 2005.

In later years, radio broadcasting moved out into the community for recording programmes on site in the villages themselves rather than pre-recording and producing them from within a studio. This method became known as Public Service Broadcasting (PSB). The role of Bangladesh Betar in development issues, as well as in protecting public values, is reflected in its different activities. Under the concept of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB), Betar has special 'cells' named Population, Health and Nutrition. These covers nearly six hours of programme per day with the view to making people aware of health related issues. The Education Broadcasting Unit of Bangladesh Betar writes the necessary guidelines for all stations regarding the programme content for its student base listeners from primary to higher-level schools. The Farm Broadcasting Unit produces special programmes for helping rural people and in particular, the farmer communities. Like the Farm Broadcasting Unit, our regional stations, situated in the coastal areas, produce programmes for fisherman and the people of these coastal areas. The livelihoods of these special character communities, the diversified culture and traditions of our country, people's values and thoughts regarding life are all examples of the themes of Bangladesh Betar's programmes. Public value in Bangladesh is closely associated with its cultural and religious traditions. Transcription Services is the archives unit that preserves our culture and glorious past within Bangladesh Betar. In addition to the regular programmes, Bangladesh Betar is broadcasting a large number of programmes on development issues with the help of UNICEF and World Bank. In order to cope with the poverty alleviation strategy of the government, Bangladesh Betar provides supportive information on micro-credits.

Bangladesh Betar provides authentic and reliable information to its listeners. Everyday, Bangladesh Betar broadcasts 17 national news bulletins in Bangla and English. Besides these news bulletins, BB operates a Traffic Broadcasting Unit with eight hours of programme time delivering information on traffic conditions. Under the Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the Bangladesh government has given emphasis to implement Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)³². As per this strategy paper, Betar works as a bridge between the people and the government.

In addition to those regular programmes, there are several important days or weeks such as; National Immunization Day (NID), Sanitation Week, O.R.T. Expedition, Safe Motherhood Week, Nutrition Week, Breast-Feeding Week, Child Rights Week, Vitamin 'A' week, and so

³² PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) is act as a document of the Govt of Bangladesh.

on, all of which are observed through the airing of special programmes dedicated to these causes. (For more details of radio stations and a brief description of the units under the Programme Wing, please see annex-8.)

Table- 1: Programmes of Bangladesh Betar at a Glance³³

This table presents the programmes of Bangladesh Betar.

At present total broadcasting hours:	183 hours and 30-minutes / day.
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES:	
According to Secondary, Higher Secondary & Open University curricula (all stations):	2hrs 30 min
Primary & mass education:	3hrs 30 min
Non-Formal education:	3 hrs.
INFORMATIVE PROGRAMME:	
Documentary/ weather/important announcement:	1 hrs 30min (All stations)
Development, health, science, economics, women and children etc:	7 hrs (All stations)
ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMME:	
Music, Drama, sports.	52 hrs
PROGRAMME FOR TARGET LISTENERS:	
Programme for Agriculture-based people:	5 hrs 02 mins /day
Programmes for Women:	4 hrs 30 mins /week
Programmes for Children:	6 hrs 30 mins /week
Programmes for Rural people and Women Workers:	3 hrs 30 mins /week
Programmes for Armed forces:	35 mins /day
Programmes for Tribal people:	7 hrs 20 minutes/week
Programmes for Youth:	3 hrs /week
Programmes for students (Higher level):	1 hr /week

2.1.4 Radio programme for indigenous people in Bangladesh Betar.

It is said that Bangladesh Betar had a starring role in the building of the nation during and after the War of Independence. The same can also be said of its role in encouraging the maintenance of the sustainable livelihoods of Bangladesh's indigenous people. There are both formal and non-formal indigenous radio programmes broadcast from the different radio stations of Bangladesh Betar. These include programmes that are broadcast in the dialect of the local representative race of indigenous people. Lists of indigenous programmes are as follows.

³³ Bangladesh Betar: Facts and Figures; Dhaka, January 10,2004; pp-8

Table- 2: Programme for indigenous (Tribal) peoples

Sl No	Name of the stations	Name of the programme	Broadcasting time of the programme	Days of the week	Representative indigenous group	Total time in a week
01	BB ³⁴ , Dhaka	<i>Sal Gittal</i>	17.10-17.45	Friday	Garo	35 minutes
02	BB,Chittagong	Paharica	16.05-16.30	Everyday	Chakma, Tripura and Marma	2 hrs 55 minutes
03.	BB, Rajshahi	Madol	14.30-15.00	Wednesday	Santal and Oraon	30 minutes
04	BB, Rangpur	Mahua	15.30-16.00	Tuesday	Santal and Oraon	30 minutes
05	BB, Sylhet	Mridhanga	15.05-15.30	Sunday	Manipuri	25 minutes
06	BB, Rangamati	Girisur, Rangasur	15.15-15.35	Everyday	Chakma, Marma, Tangchanga	2 hrs 20 minutes
07	BB, Thakurgaon	Shalpial	16.30-16.45	Alternative Sunday	Sawntal	8 minutes
08	Cox's Bazar	Rakhaing Gan	15.50-16.00	Monday	Rakhaing	10 minutes
<i>Total time in a week for indigenous (Tribal) people</i>						07 hrs 20 minutes

The following programmes broadcast in local dialects, some of which represents local indigenous people.						
9a	BB, Sylhet	Surma parer kotha	15.05-15.30	Wednes-Saturday	Local people	1 hr 40 minutes
10a	BB, Cox'sBazar	Sagor parer Jibon	15.40-16.00	Wednesday and Sunday	Fisheries people (mainly Rakhaing)	40 minutes
Total time in a week						2 hrs 20 minutes

2.1.4.1 SAL GITTAL

Among the above mentioned indigenous radio programmes, *Sal Gittal*, my research programme, began broadcasting from Bangladesh Betar Dhaka on 11th April 1976. The programme duration is 35 minutes. The Garo people chose the time of broadcasting. And it permitted them to come back from their work in the fields and sit together (see picture-9) to listen the programme. The programme description follows overleaf.

³⁴BB=Bangladesh Betar

Programme Description *Sal Gittal*

Name of the Programme	' <i>Sal Gittal</i> '
Meaning of the name	'New Day' or 'New Sun'
Language of the Programme	Garo
Indigenous Group represented	Garo
Time of Broadcast	5.10 pm every Friday
Duration of the Programme	35 minutes
Participants of the programme	Garo people
Contents of the programme	Talks (Education, Culture, Farming, Health, Sanitation, Nutrition etc.), News, Feature (Short Drama), Jingles, Songs, Interviews and listeners' replies
Name of the Broadcasting Stations	Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka
Area coverage	Most of the country

In order to establish the role of radio in the sustainable livelihoods of indigenous people, it is important to discover who the indigenous groups are and why they are indigenous. Different world bodies and forums have come forward with definitions and methods of identification of indigenous peoples. Here I discuss some of the definitions.

2.2 INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND DEFINITION

The term 'indigenous people' is a new term worldwide and there is no universal, unambiguous definition of the concept of what 'indigenous people' means. However, there are a number of criteria by which indigenous people can globally be identified and from which each group can be characterized. The most widespread approaches are those proposed in the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention no.169 and in the Martinez Cobo Report to the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination of Minorities (1986).

The ILO Convention no. 169 states that a people are considered indigenous either;

- Because they are descendants of those who lived in the area before colonization; or
- Because they have maintained their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions since colonization and the establishment of new states. In addition, the ILO Convention says that self-identification is crucial for indigenous peoples.

According to the Martinez Cobo³⁵ Report to the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination of Minorities (1986), indigenous people may be identified as follows:

- Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their

³⁵ Special Rapporteur (1972-84) of Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (which is at present Sub-Commission on Protection and Promotion of Human Rights)

territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. At present, they form non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.

This historical continuity may consist of the continuation, for an extended period reaching into the present, of one or more of the following factors:

- a) Occupation of ancestral lands, or at least of part of them;
- b) Common ancestry with the original occupants of these lands;
- c) Culture in general, or in specific manifestations (such as religion, living under a tribal system, membership of an indigenous community, dress, means of livelihood, lifestyle, etc.);
- d) Language (whether used as the only language, as mother tongue, as the habitual means of communication at home or in the family, or as the main, preferred, habitual, general or normal language);
- e) Residence in certain parts of the country or in certain regions of the world;

Moreover, an approach suggested by the Chairperson of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Mme. Erica-Irene Daes, is widely used. The identification outlined by Mme. Erica-Irene Daes designates certain peoples as indigenous:

- Because they are descendants of groups, which were in the territory of the country at the time, when other groups of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived there;
- Because of their isolation from other segments of the country's population they have preserved almost intact the customs and traditions of their ancestors which are similar to those characterized as indigenous; and
- Because they are, even if only formally, placed under a state structure, which incorporates, national, social and cultural characteristics alien to them.

According to the definition of the Asian Development Bank³⁶, a starting point would be to define indigenous people on the basis of the characteristics they display. Two significant characteristics would be;

- (i) Descent from population groups present in a given area, most often before modern states or territories were created and before modern borders were defined, and
- (ii) Maintenance of cultural and social identities and social, economic, cultural, and political institutions separate from mainstream or dominant societies and cultures. In some cases, over recent centuries, tribal groups or cultural minorities have migrated into areas to which they are not indigenous, but have established a presence and continue to maintain a definite and separate social and cultural identity and related social institutions. In such cases, the second identifying characteristic would carry greater weight.

Additional characteristics often ascribed to indigenous peoples include³⁷

- (i) Self-identification and identification by others as being part of a distinct indigenous cultural group, and the display of desire to preserve that cultural identity,
- (ii) A linguistic identity different from that of the dominant society,
- (iii) Social, cultural, economic, and political traditions and institutions distinct from the dominant culture,
- (iv) Economic systems oriented more toward traditional systems of production than mainstream systems, and
- (v) Unique ties and attachments to traditional habitats and ancestral territories and natural resources in these habitats and territories.

Indigenous people are also described with reference to their ways of life. In many cases, indigenous people live in separated communities or cultural or ethnic groupings. Such communities and groupings are often located in areas geographically distant from urban centres and often function at the periphery of the political, social, cultural, and economic systems of the dominant or mainstream society. At the same time, however, it is not unusual to find indigenous communities on the fringes of urban areas, comprising indigenous peoples who have migrated but remain distinct from the mainstream.

³⁶ Policy on indigenous peoples; Definition of Indigenous peoples: retrieved as on 07.05.06 from http://www.adb.org/documents/Policies/Indigenous_Peoples/ipp-002.asp.

³⁷ Ibid. same page

According to the definitions above, I found that both my research groups, the Garo and Rakhaing, are identifiable as indigenous people on the basis of their geographical location, their social structure, culture, language, beliefs and rituals. These characteristics set them apart from the mainstream societies of Bangladesh. However, the government of Bangladesh does not accept this identification and does not agree to identify either group as indigenous people.

2.3 GOVERNMENT AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is noted for the ethnic homogeneity of its population. Over 98 percent of the people are Bengalis, predominantly Bangla-speaking people. Of the total population in Bangladesh, 88% is Muslim and rest are Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and some others are of indigenous beliefs. Out of an estimated total population of 143.3 million (2002)³⁸, Bangladesh has 2.5 million indigenous people (*Adivashis*) belonging to 45 different ethnic groups. These groups are mainly concentrated in the north and southeastern parts of the country. There are also some indigenous people live in the northwestern parts (e.g.-Santal) and some in the southern part (e.g-Rakhaing) of Bangladesh. All the groups have their own different cultures and languages. According to the government, these groups are not treated as ‘indigenous people’, but rather as ‘ethnic minorities’.

*Indigenous peoples by definition are original inhabitants of any given territory or country. While ethnic minorities in Bangladesh may not fit this definition, the government has always been sensitive to their problems, according them priority attention*³⁹.

The PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) of Bangladesh also terms the groups as Adivashi / Ethnic Minority Groups and as Permanent Representatives of Bangladesh to the United Nations as mentioned at the Second Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Bangladesh’s constitution guarantees equal rights for all with some special opportunities being offered to the ethnic minorities. These include special quotas in educational institutions and in public services.

If we compare the Martínéz Cobo Report, the definition doesn’t fit for these groups in Bangladesh either. However, since it is not the only and universal definition for ‘indigenous people’, we can compare other definitions and methods of identification. Erica-Irene Daes’

³⁸ Iwgia: the Indigenous world 2004. Pp 290.

³⁹ Statement by H. E. Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations at the Second Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, New York 21 May 2003 (see attachment-1)

identification is fully fit for Asia and especially the indigenous people in Bangladesh. The Indigenous Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) based in Denmark wrote in the IWGIA report 2004 that;

“Indigenous peoples are the disadvantaged descendants of those peoples that inhabited a territory prior to the formation of a state. The term indigenous may be defined as characteristics relating the identity of a particular people to a particular area and distinguishing them culturally from other people or peoples”

Therefore, 2.5 million people in Bangladesh may be called or treated as indigenous people rather than an ethnic minority. Within these definitions and identifications, the two respective groups of my studies are ‘indigenous people’. To define them as such, I discuss some of their characteristics in the following paragraph 2.4.

2.4 RAKHAING AND GARO IN BANGLADESH.

2.4 Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh.

There are 45 groups of indigenous people living in Bangladesh. The number of groups always differs from between 29 to 65 because of some are counted as whole groups while others as sub groups. Bangshi, Bawm, Buna, Chak, Chakma, Coach, **Garo**, Hajong, Horijon, Khasia, Khyang, Khomoi, Lushai, Mahat/Mahatoo, Marma, Monipuri, Munda/Mundia, Murang, Muro/Mo, Pahari, Pankue/Pankoo, Rajbangshi, **Rakhaing**, Saontal, Tanchanghya, Tipra, Tripura, Urang, Uruo/Urua/Uria are but some of these groups⁴⁰. They live all over Bangladesh but are concentrated mainly in CHT (See image map of Bangladesh; page vii). Among them are the Garo and Rakhaing people. These two groups and the role radio plays on their sustainable livelihood is my interest of study. A brief description of the Rakhaing and Garo follows.

2.4.1 RAKHAING

2.4.1.1 Geographical Location of Rakhaing

The Rakhaing live in the southern part of the country, mainly in the coastal districts of Patuakhali and Barguna under Barisal Division. They also live in the coastal districts of Cox's Bazar under Chittagong Division.

The Rakhaing of Patuakhali live in the southern part of the country, in the coastal ring of the Bay of Bengal between 21°48' 16'' and 22°36' 10'' North latitude as well as between

⁴⁰ Statistical Pocket Book of Bangladesh 2002; pp- 139-140

89°52'30'' and 90°38'55'' East longitude⁴¹. The word “Rakhaing” is derived from the word “Rakkha⁴²” in Pali meaning “conservation”. “Rakhaing” denotes the name of the people who conserve faithfully the beauty of their norms, values, languages, culture and tradition.

According to the population census 1991⁴³ total 16,932 Rakhaing people lived in Bangladesh under Barisal and Chittagong division. Of them 3415 lived in district of Patuakhali and Barguna. And rest in Cox's Bazar district.

2.4.1.2 History⁴⁴

The Rakhaing people are originally from the state Arakan in Myanmar, which runs alongside the coastal belt of the Bay of Bengal, and borders Bangladesh. The rulers of the Rakhaing Nation ruled Arakan and its surrounding areas from 3325 BC up until 1784 AD when the Burmese king, Bo Do Foya, occupied Arakan and crushed the Rakhaing rulership mercilessly. Thousands and thousands of Rakhaing men, women and children were killed and abducted. To avoid the atrocities, many of them took refuge in the present-day greater Chittagong areas, islands and hill tracts. It is recorded that in 1784, about 150 Rakhaing families in 50 boats from Rambree, Man Aung and Thanswey sailed for an unknown destination through the mighty waves of the Bay of Bengal. After many long days of journeying with unlimited uncertainty and the seemingly hopelessness of the dense forests and wilderness, they reached safety in the Chittagong area of which they knew nothing. It could be paralleled to when Columbus reached the West Indies in the hope of reaching India.

Under the leadership of Generals Tat Mang Gree, Pyo Aung, U Gawng and U Akhon Chowdhury, they settled in the southern part of the Bakergonj district on the desolated islands of Rangabali, Moudhubi and Baliatali. They fought off ferocious wild animals, cut dense bushes and forests in order to recover land for settlement. For many years they toiled with inhuman efforts to tame the nature around them. Unfortunately, nature itself struck the first blow as they fled from the Burmese, thousands and thousands of Rakhaing were simply washed away out into the Bay of Bengal by cyclones and tidal bores. They also perished from disease, starvation and from the torture of miscreants of the majority communities along their path. In the Barisal District Gazetteer of 1961, the Rakhaing people were shown to be living in 168 villages of 4 thanas⁴⁵ under Bakergong and numbered 5,190 households. Presently,

⁴¹ Bangladesh District Gazetteers: Patuakhali

⁴² Promotion and Preservation of Rakhaing Language Culture & Handicrafts, Workshop report, Preface

⁴³ Statistical Pocketbook Bangladesh 2002; pp-140

⁴⁴ Promotion and Preservation of Rakhaing Language Culture & Handicrafts, Workshop report, pp-12

⁴⁵ Police Station

only 515 households are scattered around 42 clusters of Amtali, Kolapara, Khepupara and Barguna Upazilas.⁴⁶

2.4.1.3 Rakhaings are the first people to inhabit the southern Patuakhali and Barguna districts.

The Rakhaing people claimed their new lands by cutting away the jungle in greater Patuakhali and Chittagong areas. No people had lived in this area before them; they were the first to settle the islands and are so called the ‘*First People*’ (Adibashi).⁴⁷ I talked with different relevant personalities in my country about the Rakhaing people in Bangladesh. Kazi Ali Reza, Head of UNIC⁴⁸ Bangladesh, strongly told me that “*they (the Rakhaing people) are the indigenous people of that area as they came, settled and inhabited the area first.*”

2.4.1.4 Magh and Rakhaing

The word “*Magh*” was used by the Rakhaing people long ago. However, from the middle of 1960’s, the Rakhaing people and their literates started protesting against the use of the word since it has associations with the Arakani pirates of old. The Rakhaing are said to be unable to bear the legacy of a few pirates⁴⁹. William Hunter argues; “The present *Maghs* are not the successors of the original Arakani pirates. The company government brought them from Chittagong and Ramu at the end of 18th century to clear the jungle and recover land.”⁵⁰ The history and traditions of the Arakanis proves that they were a very civilized nation. In addition, it has yet to be proven that some of the Arakanis became pirates before the 14th century⁵¹. In 1614 AD, the present southern part of Bangladesh was under Rakhaing sovereignty. The Muslim Subedar Shahesta Khan defeated the Rakhaing in 1666 and named the area Islamabad, now known as Chittagong.

2.4.1.5 Marma and Rakhaing

According to the renowned anthropologist, Abdul Mabud Khan, the tribal⁵² Marma people are called *Mog* (or *Mogh*) in Bengali. The word *Mogh* is often used in a derogatory sense, so the people who are called *Mogh* prefer to identify themselves as Marma. They are also known as

⁴⁶ Promotion and Preservation of Rakhaing Language Culture & Handicrafts, Workshop report, pp-12

⁴⁷ National Seminar on Promotion and preservation of Rakhaing Language, Culture and Handicrafts; pp-2

⁴⁸ United Nations Information Center

⁴⁹ W.W.Hunter, 1875, p.188

⁵⁰ Ibid, p.4

⁵¹ Abdul Mabud Khan, June 1983, P.8

⁵² Though all ethnic groups including Rakhaing people did not agree the word “Tribe” for them as identity; rather they preferred “Ethnic Minority”.

the Rakhaing in the Patuakhali area and for the same reasons; they prefer not to identify themselves with the name *Mogh*, thus distinguishing them from those Rakhaing in the Chittagong area⁵³. The feature writer Makbul Ahmed⁵⁴ noted that when the Marma people go to Myanmar, the neighbouring country, they introduce themselves as Rakhaing, but when they are in CHT, they refrain from doing so. In Arakan Province, Myanmar where the origin of Rakahing people has been proven, there is no such mention of the word Marma. Finally, a hill tribe person of the same group is also called Marma whereas the people of the plains are called Rakhaing.⁵⁵

2.4.1.6 The Rakhaing population

At present, the Rakhaing people live in Barguna and Patuakhail as follows:

Table: 3- Rakhaing in Barguna and Patuakhail⁵⁶

Sl. No.	Localilty	District	Upazilla (Sub-District)	No. of <i>Para</i> ⁵⁷	No. of Houses
01	Baro Bagi	Barguna	Barguna Sadar	13	238
02	Baro Baliatali		Taltali	01	26
03	Kuakata	Patuakhali	KalaPara	14	149
04	Baliatali			08	50
05	Tiakhali			06	33
06	Baro Baisdia (Moudubi)		Galachipa	05	19
	Total			47	515

Contrastingly, in 1947-48 the then Rakhaing people in Bakergong district were recorded as follows:

Table: 4- Rakhaing peoples in Bakergong districts in 1947-48

Sl. No.	Localilty	Thana (Police station)	No. of <i>Para</i>	No. of Houses
01	Baro Bagi	Amtali	48	1,380
02	Baro Baliatali	Barguna Sadar	09	390
03	Kuakata (Latacapli)	Kalapara	54	1,785
04	Baliatali/boultali		29	685
05	Tiakhali		17	530
06	Baro Baisdia (Moudubi)	Galachipa	11	420
	Total		168	5,190

⁵³ Bangladesh Land Forest and Forest people; pp-08

⁵⁴ Feature writer Makbul Ahmed; in his feature "Bangladesh er rakhaing samprodaya O Rakaing der Noboborso" in Daily Purbokon, New years edition, 1401 Bangla

⁵⁵ Maung Ba Aung (Maung Ba) 2003; pp-27-30

⁵⁶ Ibid pp-75

⁵⁷ *Para* (= A smaller living area constructed with few houses is called *Para*)

2.4.1.7 Why were these numbers reduced drastically?

From the review of census reports the increase in population from 1872 to 1951 was described as normal, but the population has been decreasing abnormally since 1961. From the late 1950s, the smooth ongoing economy of the Rakhaing was disrupted and upset by the aggressive attitudes of some Bangalees towards Rakhaing-lands and by frequent natural disasters such as cyclones, salinity, drought and famine. The frequent cyclones and floods of the 1950s, 1960, 1964, 1965 and 1970, for example, have caused a loss of lives and one of the major reasons for the decrease in population⁵⁸. A group of land robbers took these opportunities of the cyclones for cheating the Rakhaing people by uprooting them from their own land. As a result, a large number of Rakhaing people had to flee Bangladesh to a neighbouring country. According to renowned historian and researcher U Ukko, during British rule there were 306 villages and 16,882 houses in the districts of Chittagong, Barguna and Patuakhali⁵⁹. Rakhaing Development Foundation sources the present numbers of Rakhaing people as listed in the following table.

Table.5⁶⁰: Rakhaing people according to RDF⁶¹

Sl No	Districts	Upazilla	Population
01	Cox'sbazar	Cox'sbazar Sadar, Ramu, Cakria, Pakua, Moheshkhali and Teknaf	85,000
02	Barguna	Barguna Sadar, Amtali	6,000
03	Patuakhali	Patuakhali Sadar, Galacipa and KhepuPara	5,000
04	CHT		50,000
05	Other districts		4,000
Total			150,000

Table: 6- Some Rakhaing Para in the district of Patuakhali and Barguna.

Name of the Para	Upazilla	District
Kalachan Para, Naiori Para, Amkhol Para, Thonju Para, Mou thou Para khajura, Dior amkhola Para, Misri Para, Noya Para (1), Betkata Para, Pakshia Para, Kuakata, Boulitali, Hari Para, Noya Para (2), Keng Para, Tulatuli Para, Noya Para (3), Mel Para, Choy ani Para	Kola Para / Khepu Para	Patuakhali
Chatian Para	Galachipa	
Gora Thakur Para, Chaton Para, Taltali, manu khaing Para, Agathakur Para, Nameese Para, Lau Para, Tati Para, Talukder Para, Kabiraj Para, Soudagar Para	Amtali	Barguna
Balitali Para	Barguna Sadar	

⁵⁸ Abdul Mabud Khan; June 1983; pp12-13.

⁵⁹ Ibid pp-80

⁶⁰ Ibid pp-81

⁶¹ RDF is an NGO established in 1st July 1993, to protect the Rakhaing and other ethnic minority communities from extinction. The organization is duly registered in 1994 with the NGO affairs Bureau, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; it has a central office at Dhaka, headed by the chairman and three regional offices at Cox's bazar. Barguna and Patuakhali districts. Freeing Rakhaing and other ethnic minority people of Bangladesh from poverty trap and insecurity is the Vision of the RDF.

Every Para on the above list has its name connected with the Rakhaing. For example; Kolapara, Kuakata, and Khepupara in the Patuakhali district and Taltali in the Barguna district and many other places name in Cox's Bazar districts are from Rakhaing words or people's names. Even some literates say that Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, is a Rakhaing word.

2.4.1.8 Rakhaing Cultural Heritages

The Rakhaing of Patuakhali represent the great Mongolian race that has spread throughout Tibet, Myanmar, Indonesia, Korea, China, Japan, Siberia and also includes Bangladesh.⁶² Bengalese however, is anthropologically different. The distance of the islands of Patuakhali from the capital city of Dhaka has kept the Rakhaing geographically detached from the mainland. Economically, the Rakhaing people of Patuakhali depend on the land and the agricultural production of that land. They brought seeds of various crops with them, cleared away the areas of the jungles for farming and established an agricultural based society. They inherited this trend from their forefathers. In addition, they also wove cloth on handlooms for several years.

2.4.1.9 Housing, Custom and Festival



The style and structure of the houses of the Rakhaing are different from the houses of the Bengalese. Like other Mongoloid races, they also make a high platform and on which to build their houses. Some of the roofs of the houses are of leaves of the fan palm and others of tin; this is in accordance with class distinction. The Rakhaing of Patuakhali observe various ceremonies within their simple lifestyle; among them are the religious ceremonies like the birth anniversary of Goutama Buddha, the Baishaki Purnima, Maghi Punima, Probarana Purnima and the spring festival.

Picture: -1: A Rakhaing woman sitting on the doorstep of her house with radio.
(Photo: Abdul Hoque)

⁶² The Rakhaines; The exile in their own kingdom:pp-35

There are also social ceremonies such as marriage, the birth of a child, funerals or ceremonies for the occasion of opening a new house or cutting the new paddy. The *Sanggraeing* ceremony (Water Festival) in *Chaitro Sankranti*⁶³ is the main annual festival of the Rakhaing. On this three day festive they wear new clothes, sing and dance, make special dishes and spend three days in merriment. One of the essential and entertaining matters of this festival is that they sprinkle water on each other while singing and dancing. Young boys and girls are full of joy during the major festivals.

2.4.1.10 Rituals, religion, values and mentality

The Rakhaing are cremated after death. At first, the relatives are called in and the dead body is bathed with soap and perfume. The pyre is made; the relatives of the dead person make a donation for these and the corpse is either taken to the crematory or laid on the pyre. Three layers of wood are put on a man's dead body and four layers on the woman's. Then the Buddhist priest prays holding the turban of the dead for peace of the departed soul. People around the pyre recite sacred hymns and sprinkle-scented water over the dead body. The nearest relative of the dead person ignites a fire in the mouth. After cremation, everybody bathes in the river. The ashes of the pyre are buried and bamboo pole with a white flag is placed on it. After seven days, the relatives call in the Buddhist priests to arrange obsequies and invite the villagers to a dinner. The guests pray for the peace of the departed soul and take the meal. The Rakhaing are Teravadi Buddhist in faith. This sets them apart from the majority of people in Bangladesh and unfortunately makes it a focus of increased racial discrimination, which in turn, makes it hard for them to follow their own traditions and norms. There are signs of old values, beliefs in fate, cultural ethnocentrism and racial pride and dignity among them according George Foster⁶⁴. The Rakhaing also believe in witchcraft. Children learn their religious rites in the Buddhist temples directly from the Buddhist priests. These young boys live in the temples for several days to learn how to perform religious ceremonies. Girls perform their religious rites at home frequenting the temples on certain religious occasions.

2.4.1.11 Dress

Rakhaing dress is different from other ethnic groups, particularly the women's. They wear the traditional *thabine* or skirt with a blouse and sometimes they don an *orna* (scarf). The women also wear *lungi*. Their *lungi* and *fotua* are different from Banglees.

⁶³ Last day of the Bangalee month Chaitra

⁶⁴ George M. Foster, Bombay, 1973, pp82-91

2.4.1.12 Language

There is a strong history behind the Rakhaing language which began at the end of sixth century. They settled in Bangladesh among other groups and brought with them their own culture and language. There are 45 letters in the Rakhaing alphabet; twelve *sara* (vowels) and 33 *byay* (consonants)⁶⁵. Until 1666 AD, the greater part of southern Bangla was under Arakani rule and inhabited by Rakhaing people. There were many renowned literates such as U Dhura, U E Mala and Ukk Bang and all of them were from Arakan ruled Bangalee people. According to Milton, “Language and literature proves (evidence) the Nation’s stringiness and weakness”. The conscience of Rakhaing is so unconquerable that even though they have been living closely with the Bangalees for years; they have not lost their originality and own identity⁶⁶. In the socio-linguistic theory, an unexpected phenomenon has been surprisingly discovered; there is no recognizable sign of convergence of the two languages, though the two races have been living side by side for years. It is an antithetical exception to acculturation or diffusion. The Rakhaing of Bangladesh, who make up only 0.5% of the total population have not been linguistically or culturally engulfed by the 99.5% of Bengalese they live among? According to Mustafa Majid, “the difference of Rakhaings from the neighbouring Bengalese is very clear in their housing, behaviour patterns, religion, language, educational values, mentality, marriage, family, heredity rules and culture”⁶⁷.

2.4.1.13 Education

Rakhaing children learn their first lesson at the schools of the Buddhist temples known as ‘*Kyang*’. Generally, the Rakhaing language, along with some scriptural manners and customs of Buddhism are taught in these ‘*Kyang*’. This means that every man and woman of Rakhaing society is able to read and write in his or her native Rakhaing language. However, the essential two languages of Bangladesh, Bangla and English, are far from their reach⁶⁸.

2.4.1.14 Conclusion

At this point in time, the Rakhaing people are, in comparison to the whole of Bangladesh, highly illiterate, have poor access to education and health services. They are marginalized and persecuted due to their religion (Buddhism), appearance and language (Rakhaing), cultural genocide, low-income earning capacity and poor accessibility to affordable credit due to

⁶⁵ Ibid; pp 42-46

⁶⁶ Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh District Gazetteer; Patuakhali, BG press, Dhaka, 1982, p. 48

⁶⁷ Mustafa Majid, 2001 pp.65

⁶⁸ Abdul Mabud Khan, *ibid.* p.10

poverty and prejudice. They have limited access to social services or education and the degree of sufferings is high. Hundreds of Rakhaing families are still living in jungle environments. The Rakhaing people want to stay pure and summon dignity from others. The Rakhaing inhabit stretches of land along the Bay of Bangal and into the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) areas. Although they have high officials working both with government and non-government bodies, organization comes first along with good leadership quality. The Rakhaing people need to act as one for the sake of their language, literature, history, culture and heritage. It is hoped that the level of consciousness among the younger generation of the educated Rakhaing has grown. The Rakhaing culture is a part of the national culture and the Rakhaing people are a gallant partisan group of every nation building issue in Bangladesh. They are the indigenous people in Bangladesh comparing the whole identification and definitions of indigenous peoples.

2.4.2 THE GARO⁶⁹

2.4.2.1 Geographical Location of Garo

About 575,000 (1997 IMA) Garo people lived in the bordering areas of the Indian State of Meghalaya, Garo Hills District; West Assam, Goalpara, Kamrup, Karbi Anglong Districts; Nagaland, Kohima District; Tripura, South Tripura District; West Bengal, Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar Districts. According to the 1991 population census in Bangladesh, a total of 102,000 Garo people lived in the northern part of Bangladesh. They were mainly in areas under greater Mymensingh District at latitude 25 degrees- 26 degrees N by longitude 90 degrees-91 degrees E. Later, The Garo spread to Nalitabari, Kalmakanda, Durgapur, Sreebardi, Barhatta, Dhobaura, Haluaghat, Purbadhala,



*Picture: 2- Garo women*⁷⁰

Phulpur, Fulbaria, Bhaluka, Madhupur and other places of Mymensingh, Netrokona, Sherpur and Tangail Districts. Some Garo live in Sunamganj of Sylhet, Sreepur and Kawraid of Gazipur and Raumari of Kurigram. Many Garo, once living in the Bangladesh territory, migrated to the Indian State of Meghalaya.

⁶⁹ Banglapedia.search.com.bd/HT/G_0043.htm - 26k

⁷⁰ Sources internet

Modhupur Garh area under the district of Tangail, is the most important place for the Garo people. In Bangladesh, the Garo people live in the 36 Upazillas of the following 12 districts: -

Name of the Districts	Populations
Tangail, Maymensingh, Jamalpur, Netrokona and Sherpur	Densely
Sunamgang, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Hobigang, Kurigram, Gaibandha and Gazipur	A few

2.4.2.2 Appearance

The Garo have round faces, black hair and eyes, foreheads extended to the eye area, deep eyebrows, small eyes, flat noses and high jaws. Beards rarely grow on their cheeks and they almost have no hair on their body. The Garo are short but usually have solid bodies with wide chests and bulky arm and leg muscles. Their skin is yellowish and smooth. There are some similarities between the Chinese and the Garo in language as well as folk culture. That's why the Garo are said to have an ancestral relationship with China. They are the nomadic tribe of the Bodo group of Mongoloids.

2.4.2.3 History

According to some anthropologists, the Garo descended from the northeast bank of Lake Koknar, in the northwestern Chinese province of Chinghai, about three to five thousand years ago and they first settled in Tura Province, Tibet, and in the Nakalbari area of Bhutan. When they were forced to quit these areas, they moved to different places of Cooch Bihar, Assam and to the Rangamati area of Rangpur in Bengal. During British rule they had a good communication facility from Goalpara, the abode of the Garo in Rangpur, to Assam. Due to internal conflicts, a group of Garo had to leave and began to settle the inaccessible forest areas of the Garo Hills from which the tribe permanently got the name "Garo". The Garo Hills cover an area of 3,000 square miles. They have also been known as Garrow and Mande.

2.4.2.4 Nature

The Garo are mostly dependent on the forest for their livelihood. The natural habitats of the Garo people are the hills, hillocks, deep forests and places near fountains, springs, and other water sources. Animals, reptiles and birds are their closest neighbours; the animals they come in contact with include rhinoceros, tigers, elephants, wild buffalo, goyals (wild cow), dogs, deer, porcupines and rabbits. *Jhum*⁷¹ cultivation on the slopes of the hills, livestock farming and hunting are their main professions. Handicrafts and cottage industries are recent additions to their livelihood. They eat all animals except cats, which are their totem. They live in an

⁷¹ Jhum =Slash and burn technology of agriculture practiced mainly by the people of pre-plough age. Jhum is still practiced in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

isolated world within their own geographic, economic and cultural boundaries and follow their own customary norms. They do not have a king but are ruled by a tribal chief.

2.4.2.5 Achchik and Lamdani

The Garo call them *A'chik* or *Mande*. Some Garo abandoned their houses from hills due to the difficulties of living and settled in forest zones in downhill areas. These Garo are known as *Lamdani*. The Garo continuing to live in the hills call them the *Achchik*. To the *Achchiks*, *Lamdanis* are the *Mindaya*, a name derived from the Chinese word *mandai*, which means “man”. The *Achchiks* do not like *Lamdanis*.

2.4.2.6 Land and Garo

The Garo people did not own land historically; whatever land they hold in possession today, they do so without any ownership documents. They also do not pay rent for the land they inhabit and cultivate. In the beginning of this century, the density of the Garo population in the areas bordering with India was 44 persons per square mile. Due to increased population, the pressure on the land around Garo habitats has increased manifold, particularly on that of *Jhum* cultivation, as it requires large areas of land. According to a 1979 survey report of Bangladesh, 20% of the Garo do not possess any land, 30% possess only homestead land, 30% work as hired labourers and 20% cultivate mortgaged land. According to Sanjeeb Drong, a writer and social worker of Garo origin, the Garo people used to work voluntarily in other fields when needed. Many opportunists have made a fortune by illicitly occupying Garo land by cheating the Garo people; unfortunately this is common in the case of every indigenous group in Bangladesh and in many parts of the world.

2.4.2.7 Dress and food habits



In the past, the Garo used to wear items made from the bark of trees. The common dress of the modern day Garo male is *Jana* or *Nengti* (a narrow piece of cloth around the waist), Garo people of a relatively higher status wear short woven skirts woven. The women cover their breasts by knotting a piece of short cloth on their backs. The males also wear *gamcha* or

Picture: 3- Collection of Skulls (Photo: Abdul Hoque)

dhuti and many women put on saris, shirts and trousers. The Garo burn the bark of banana tree trunks and use the ashes for making soap and salt. They also use the ashes as a special ingredient in making food. Fruits comprise the staple food of the Garo and they hardly suffer from any shortage in food supply. The Garo cook their food in bamboo pipes. They drink plenty of wine and entertain guests invariably with meat. On festive occasions, visiting guests bring cocks or pigs. The collections of the skulls, especially jaws, of pigs in a house prove their gestures i.e. it brings prestige from relatives.

2.4.2.8 Religious

According to a survey conducted in late 1970s, about 80% of the Garo of Bangladesh has become Christians. At present, almost all Garo are Christians and only a few are Muslim. According to Sanjeeb Drong, about 95% of the Garo are Christian⁷². One of the major reasons why the Garo have adopted Christianity is their immediate economic gain in the form of direct financial assistance offered to newly baptized Christian. However, the Garo have retained their traditional culture and customs even after converting to Christianity. Besides traditional beliefs, the Garo follow their own religion *Sangshareq*, which has its roots in agriculture. They are not concerned about worshipping idols and are not bothered by the concepts of sin and virtue, gods and goddesses and heaven and hell. They observe thirteen or more *brata* (vows) and festivals in a year and pray for the fertility of the soil, safety of the harvests and protection from evil spirits, diseases and epidemics. The *Sangshareq* religion has elements of *mantra-tantra* and magic. The Garos are animists and believe in the dual existence of matters. They ascribe life to nature and inanimate objects and consider snakes and tigers as personated forms of dead souls. They believe that some trees, stones and hills are the abodes of the spirits and therefore, it is better to keep away from them. Among the Garo, the people who arrange festivals, organize vows and treat and cure patients with folk medicine are those with supernatural powers and therefore, enjoy respect and honour in the community. These people are called *khamal* or *kamal*. The Garo do not give their children any sweet names because, they believe, such names may attract evil spirits and cause harm to them.

2.4.2.9 Rituals

When someone dies, the Garo sacrifice animals offer food to the funeral guests and observe different vows before and after the funeral rituals, so that the soul of the dead person cannot do them any harm. They believe that the soul of a dead man stays for some time at Chick

⁷² Drong, Sanjeeb, August 2004; pp- 47

Sung, the highest peak of the Aro Mountains. The soul moves around unknown places of the vast world until at last it returns as a spirit or is rebirth as a human being or animal. People who commit suicide or are killed by a ferocious animal are reborn as animals. Their funeral ceremonies are observed in prolonged rituals. In that ritual, the dead body is bathed and then thoroughly anointed with oil by a woman while other women sing traditional wailing songs. The men subsequently wrap the body in a cloth sheet. People attending the ceremony pray for the departed soul and offer gifts. The body is then shifted to the funeral pyre and while still on fire, a piece of half burnt bone is collected for burial in the deceased person's house. The spot of the buried limb is called *khatik*. A portion of the ashes collected from the pyre is spread on the fields. For seven days after death, members of the family eat only vegetables and also offer food to the dead person. Following this, they celebrate *Shraddha*⁷³ with rice and chicken. In the evening of the day of *Shraddha*, they hold a mourning procession. A feast with plenty of wine marks the last offering of food to the dead; the celebrations include dances, songs, and rhythmic beating of drums.

2.4.2.10 Festivals

The moon, sun, clouds, rain, rivers and crops are like gods to the Garo. In the Bangla month of *Chaitra*, the Garo clear the jungle, burn wood and leaves to ashes, and sow the paddies. They then observe *Asiroka* (the New Year festival) and pray for safety and security throughout the year. They believe that evil spirits may steal away ripe and harvested crops from the fields and storehouses. To protect themselves against spirits, they perform religious rituals in the form of festivals under different names while sowing seeds and harvesting crops. The largest among these festivals is the *Wangala*.

2.4.2.10.1 Wangala:

The whole Garo area celebrates *Wangala* in full fanfare. Adults drink homemade wine, young boys and girls wear specially designed dresses, colour their skin and sing and dance wildly. They also entertain each other with drink and in their celebrations, choose their husbands or wives. The musical instruments used in the festival include buffalo horns and drums of different sizes. Strong and young boys dance vigorously with shields and swords in their hands to frighten evil spirits. These performances are part of the *Sangshareq* religion and aim at neutralizing spirits, ghosts, and demons in two ways; by offering *rogala* (oblation) to them and by frightening them.

⁷³ Shraddha or obsequies, is the Hindu ritual of treating people to feasts in the name of the deceased.

2.4.2.11 Family systems

The Garo are matriarchal. Husbands live in the houses of wives and are engaged in household work. The mother is the owner of all the property of a household. After her death, the youngest daughter or any daughter nominated by the mother, becomes the heir and is called *Nakma*. The wife of a husband acquires ownership of the assets earned by him. The children are also treated as assets and are owned by the mother. They are named after their mother's family and the mother is responsible for rearing the children. After the death of the wife, the husband has no moral right to stay in the marital home. However, the custom of leaving is rarely applied in practice. Daughters are more cared for and loved in a family because the sons are to leave home after marriage and are therefore not treated well in the family if they do not marry in time. They wail when they leave home and enter their new residence, they remain downhearted during the initial days of separation from the family home and integration into the marital home. The wife will console him with love and care. Often, a newly married husband runs away but is caught and brought back. Because the husbands do not own property, they care little about the family. However, their wives scold them and sometimes even threaten them by the warning that they will be driven out of the house.

2.4.2.12 Marital systems

The rate of literacy in the Garo community is higher among the women than among the men. The reason is the matriarchal system. This makes it difficult for a girl to find a husband with equal standing. In the Garo community, marriage within the same clan is not allowed since the boys and girls of a clan are considered as brothers and sisters. The Garo tribe is divided into ten clans. In case someone violates the principle of not marrying within the clan, he is deprived of all property rights and ousted from the village. On many occasions, if a girl likes a young man of a suitable clan, he is forcibly made to marry her. The clan of the bridegroom does not oppose the match.

2.4.2.13 Garo language

The Garo language belongs to the Bodo branch of the Bodo-Naga-Kachin family of the Sino-Tibetan phylum (Shinn et al. 1970: p. 119). The Garo language is, undoubtedly, an unwritten language, even though it is an ancient Aryan language. It is a very rich language and full of proverbs, idioms, songs, rhymes, oral narratives, folk-tales, palagan and so on. Their language bears most of the history of the Garo people and their religious and cultural codes. Its vocabulary contains words borrowed from many different languages. The syntax, semantics,

position of cases and inflections, verbs and transformations of words is all very systematic and resembles those of other developed languages. It is likely that this language has a long history. Some believe that the Garo language is a mixed form of Bangla and Assamese, as it resembles both languages. Actually, it is a primary language. Different dialects are found in the Garo language since the Garo have been scattered in different regions of different districts for a long duration. *Abeng* and *Achik* are two of the different dialects. The Garo language can be written in Bangla script without any difficulty. Although Bangla is their official language, the Garo language is the familiar language in Garo society.

2.4.2.14 Conclusion

The Garo do not practice family planning and the reproduction rate among them is higher than the national average. The rate of literacy among the Garo is also higher than the national average, but only a very small number of them acquire higher education. Some educated Garo women work as expert nurses in different hospitals at home and abroad. Some young men and women work in junior positions in Christian NGOs. Others teach in educational institutions in the Garo region. Recently, some Garo were appointed to higher position in police force and in administration. There is even a Garo elected Member of Parliament. The social system, tastes, behaviour and dress of the Garo are all undergoing change as a result of their constant interaction with the people of the plains. However, the women of this matriarchal tribe are not in favour of accepting these changes. But in all kinds of identifications and definitions Garo is an indigenous group in that region. One Garo high school teacher told me “in all respects we are indigenous people”.

CHAPTER- 3

METHODOLOGY

Abstract: Field work was carried out enthusiastically despite having to solve all kinds of practical problems. Methods included; interviewing indigenous people, participatory observation and group discussions and consulting experts. Relevant areas of the Rakhaing people (Patuakhali, Barguna, and Cox's Bazar) and those of the Garo (Tangail and Mymensingh) were travelled and a lot of empirical data was found through interviewing for the thesis.

There are no hard and fast methodological rules for conducting research. However, the methodology for the research into indigenous issues should have its separate dimensions or aims. Many indigenous writers or researchers have come forward with comments about such aims. According to Jelena Porsanger⁷⁴, 'The main aim of indigenous methodologies is to ensure that research on indigenous issues can be carried out in a more respectful, ethical, correct, sympathetic, useful and beneficial fashion, seen from the point of view of indigenous peoples'. During my fieldwork I carried out interviews, participatory observations, group discussions and obtained expert opinions by trying to follow such indigenous methodologies. In addition, my final presentation and findings have been written in indigenous peoples' own voices.

3.1.1 Interviews:

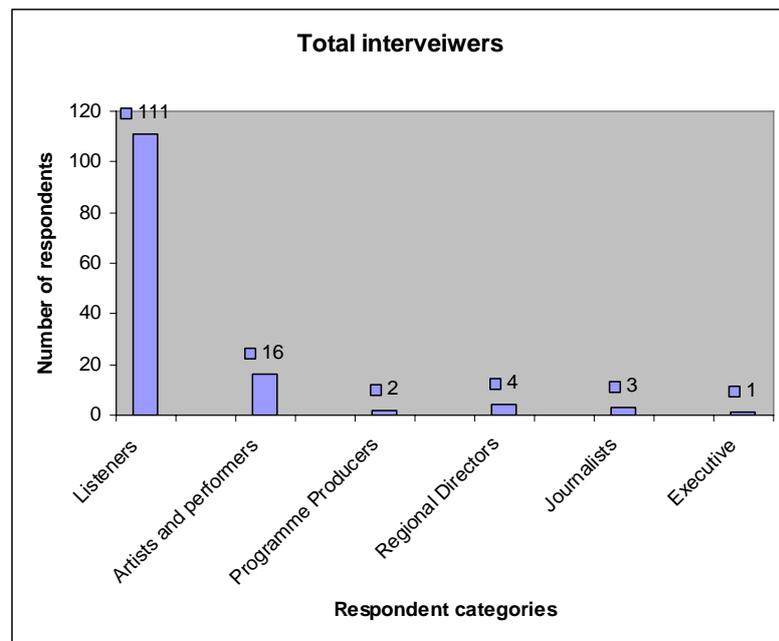
For my field visits in Bangladesh and in order to collect information for this thesis, I designed a questionnaire before leaving Norway in June 2005. However, several parts of the questionnaire had to be changed during my fieldwork. Interviewing several different types of radio listeners, especially those from indigenous groups, were my principle fieldwork groups. More over, I interviewed programme producers, programme assistants, artists, scriptwriters, singers and regional directors in relation to programme production. Journalists and executives were also interviewed for this purpose. Before asking specific questions related to radio listening, I asked about the respondents' personal life, family, social relationships, life histories, employment and educational experiences, religion ethnicity and other interests that play a role in their lives. In order to get their own stories in their own words, I interviewed a few of them in-depth in a very non-formal way. Mr. *Gambu Se* of the Rakhaing people at Khepupara is one of them. The interview with him gave me a deep insight into the present situation of the Rakhaing people in Bangladesh. Although he is not a leader, his voice represented the general views among them. I also interviewed policy makers and social workers from both indigenous and non-indigenous groups of people.

⁷⁴ Porsanger, Jelena 2004: pp-105-116

Four Regional Directors from Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka, Chittagong, Rangamati and Cox's Bazar were interviewed. Three renowned journalists and the Deputy Director General of Bangladesh Betar (Annex-2) were interviewed exclusively. Out of these 26 personnel, 11 were from Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka, seven from Chittagong, two from Rangamati, four from Bandarban and two from Cox's Bazar.

Graphical presentations of my respondents are as follows: -

I interviewed 137 personnel of which 111 were listeners. 16 people were artists and performers; two were assistant directors who were responsible for production of indigenous programmes. Four regional directors, three journalists and one executive.



Graph-1 Respondents categories

3.1.2 Participatory observation

Participatory observation was the main research method of my field work, this meant engaging with people in as many different situations as possible. This was important because I was looking at what people actually do as well as opposed to what they used to do; I was looking at what they do and say in the real flow of events⁷⁵. Participatory observation included joining their cultural programme organized by them, living with them from dawn to dusk and staying overnight in both the Garo and the Rakhaing areas.

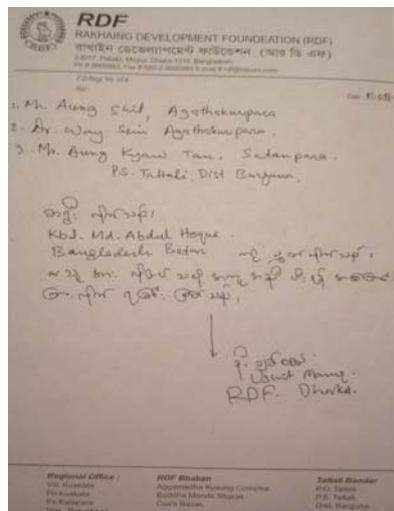
3.1.3 Fieldwork and Problems:

3.1.3.1 Rakhaing area

I faced some socio-cultural problems, mainly in getting to know them and in being considered as trustworthy. In entering the Rakhaing area of Patuakhali, I was assisted by one my relatives, *Kalam Sikder*, who has some relatives living in the Rakhaing area of Khepupara.

⁷⁵ Ethnographic Action Research; pp:52

These relatives introduced me to one of the Rakaing personnel, *Gambu Se*, who helped me a lot in interviewing some Rakhaing people within the Rakhaing area of Khepupara. Prior to leaving Patuakhali town, a friend of one of my relatives who is the local religious leader of Rakhaing, gave me a letter to the community leader of the Rakhaing people in Khepupara. When I showed the letter to that leader, he just told me, ‘You are welcome to interview every person of my community’; the importance of the letter was revealed to me at this point. He also gave me address of the chairman of RDF (Rakhaing Development Foundation) who lives in the capital city. After coming back from my first field trip in Khepupara, I met with the RDF chairman in his office. He is a very cooperative person and he gave me another letter addressed to his younger brother. When I visited the Taltali area of Barguna District, this letter helped me a great deal; it enabled me to enter the society and become familiar with the lifestyles and many parts of their livelihood without suspicion. Mr. Shahin, a college lecturer at Khanabad College in Bangladesh Betar Barisal; he is also an artist of Rakhaing areas from his locality in *Latachapli* of the Khepupara upazilla during my second visit to Khepupara.



Letter from RDF chairman written in their native language.

3.1.3.2 Garo Area:

I received the help of Michael Mritunjoy Rema, Chief Producer of the ‘*Sal Gittal*’ programme in getting into the Garo area of Modhupur, Tangail. He is the main person responsible for organizing the ‘*Sal Gittal*’ programme. He informed the people of Pargacha village beforehand about my pending visit and opened the way for me to stay there overnight. Mr. Tires Nokrok was the mediator for my visit and Mr. Dipok Mrang from Dhaka assisted me in getting there. I was fortunate enough to join in on a cultural evening in the village where I found the young people were very much interested in performing their best. Some of them will get chance to perform on radio for their own programme ‘*Sal Gittal*’. I met with artists, performers, village leaders and schoolteachers. I was amazed to see the local school’s management system; at night until 10 pm I found all the students of the school were still there studying, despite missing the popular quarterly television programme ‘*Ittadi*’.

3.1.4 Group discussion:

After my visits to Pirgacha (a Garo village in Modhupur), I had a group discussion with the educated Garo people in Dhaka. Many of the Garo are working in different government and non-government organizations. Religious leaders and schoolteachers also joined in on the discussion meeting. Some

of them are active participants of the programme as hosts, singers and performers, which broadcast from Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka. They shared their experiences and their future expectations of the



radio programmes. I enjoyed the

Picture: 4- Group discussion with Garo literates

(Photo: Mahmood Reza)

discussion and gained a lot of relevant information.

3.1.4.1 Researcher and / or Radio Executive?

A joint meeting for the discussion of the radio programme proves that they give importance to the programme in their sustainable livelihoods. They highly regarded this programme as a means to protect and promote their language, culture and heritage. I was expecting their reaction to me to be that of a student and a researcher. However, they treated me both as a radio executive and as a research student of the Masters Programme in Indigenous Studies at Tromsø University, Norway. It gave me a different taste for the work of my thesis. They knew I was working as a researcher who could not fulfil their aspirations for the programme, but at the same time they expected that as a radio executive I may be helpful in the future in their hope of attaining a successful, extended, livelihood-oriented native language radio programme. There was a threadbare discussion of the programme, its history, contents, and present situation as well as future expectations. Some suggestions and comments from their views are reflected in the last part of my thesis (as suggestions and/ or recommendations).

3.1.5 Expert Opinions:



Picture-5: Experts opinion

I shared views and opinions of different experts from three⁷⁶ universities in relevant fields and I have tried to incorporate these in my thesis. Mr. Abdul Awal Biswas⁷⁷ was one of them. He wrote his M. Phil of Ethnography of a coastal people in Bangladesh on the Rakhaing of Patuakhali and later he did his Ph D on the same issue.

3.1.6 Other resources

Before going into the respected field areas of Bangladesh, I had planned to do a comparative and vast study on indigenous people and media issues throughout the world. The CI (Communication and Information) sector of UNESCO in particular has some works and research in this area. After contacting the CI sector of UNESCO, they send me a USB containing a lot of related research papers and information, which helped me to write my thesis from a knowledgeable and informative view point.

The collaboration with other media companies was also of benefit. NRK⁷⁸ Sami Radio Center sent the document ‘Sami Radio and Indigenous Media Cooperation’ which gave me a basis for comparison and a future directive for indigenous radio programmes (Para 5.3). Cordial engagement with the indigenous people of these programmes has been greatly appreciated.

3.2 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF MY RESEARCH AREA

3.2.1. Patuakhali, Barguna and Cox’sbazar

The Rakhaing people are living in different upazillas⁷⁹ of Patuakhali and Barguna (See box-3). The historically known Kuakata⁸⁰ is under the upazilla Khepupara⁸¹ in the administrative

⁷⁶ Dhaka University, Dhaka; Shah Jalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet and Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, Bangladesh.

⁷⁷ Head and Associate Professor, Department of anthropology, Shah Jalal University of Science & Technology, Sylhet, Bangladesh.

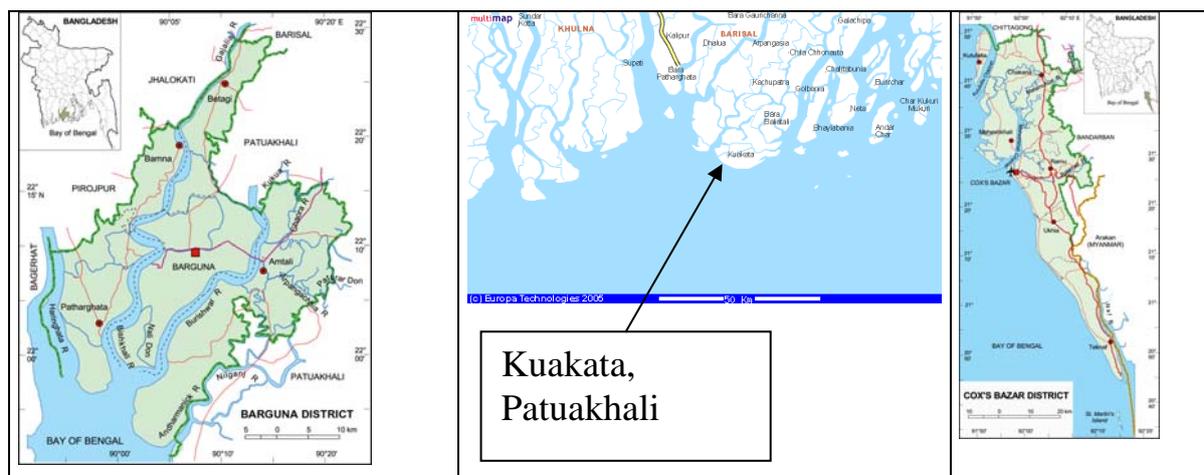
⁷⁸ The NRK (Norsk rikskringkasting = the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation) is Norway's major broadcasting institution with nine radio channels and two TV channels with approx. 100% coverage.

⁷⁹ Sub Districts: Previously it was only Police stations and in 1984 many PS had been upgraded as Upazilla (Sub Districts). Though there are one or more police stations under one Upazilla.

⁸⁰ One of the well-known *sea shore* in Bangladesh; many people used visit this area every year.

⁸¹ Khep U and Kola U was two Rakhaing brother lived here several years ago. By the time being the name of place became *Khepupara* and *Kolapara*. One place has two names. Administrative upazilla is khepupara while administrative police station is Kolapara.

district of Patuakahali. Kuakata⁸² is well known as the habitat of the Rakhaing people in Bangladesh.



Map-2: Barguna, Patuakhali and Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh.

Before my study on this issue, I knew that the Rakhaing people lived in the districts of Patuakahli and Barguna. Now it is clear to me that this group of people live not only in Patuakahli and Barguna, but they also live in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban. The number of Rakhaing people living in Cox's Bazar is greater than that of Patuakhali and Barguna.

Box-3: PATUAKHALI AND BARGUNA

Bangladesh is divided into six administrative divisions. They are Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet. The Barisal and Sylhet Divisions began functioning only a few years ago. Formerly, the Barisal Division came under Khulna division and Sylhet was under Chittagong Division. I first focused on the Rakhaing living in the southern part of Bangladesh in the district of Patuakhali and Barguna under Barisal Division. On January 1st 1969, Patuakhali became a new district in the southern part of Barisal. Patuakhali has two subdivisions; Patuakhali and Barguna. In 1984, these subdivisions subsequently became two separate districts in their own right. Barisal District was divided into four separate districts named Barisal, Jhalokhati, Pirozpur and Bhola. Later in 1999, former Patuakhali and Barisal (i.e the present six districts) came under a new Barisal Division.

⁸² Kuakata means digging a whole into the soil to get fresh water to drink. When the Rakhaing people first came to this area to live, they dig the whole here. Rakhaing ward *Khua* means whole and *kata* means to dig. And thus the name of place became as *Kuakata*. Which also prove that the Rakhaing are the first people of this area.

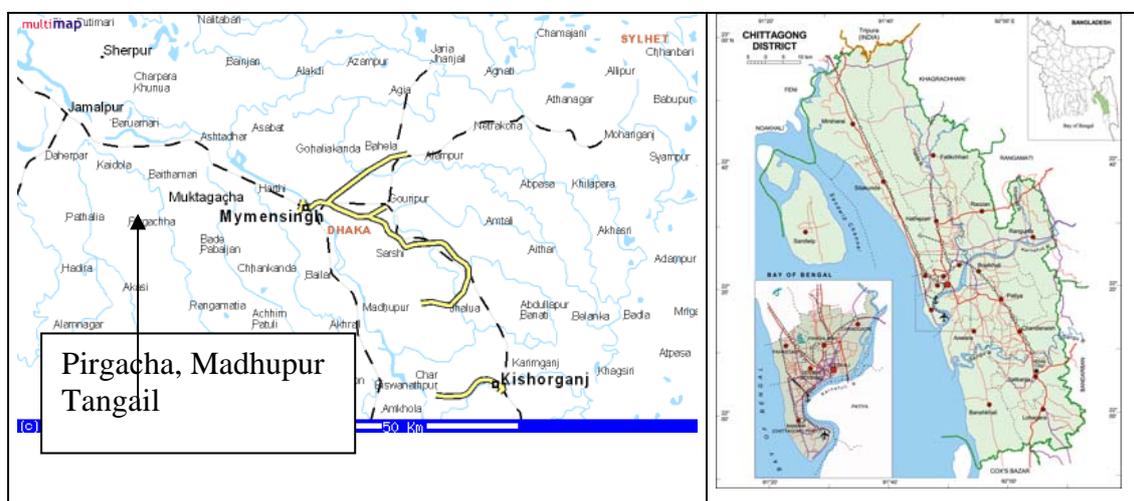
3.2. 1. 1 Why Rakhaing in Cox's Bazar are known differently?

Cox's Bazar is well known as a Bangladesh tourist spot nationally and internationally. Tourists visit this area to see the beauty of the seashore, especially during the winter in Bangladesh. People used to go to Cox's Bazar to shop for *Burmese Lungi*, *sharees* and other materials, therefore increasing the knowledge of the Burmese markets and Burmese people. Since these Burmese people were essentially of Rakhaing origin (see paragraph 2.4.1.5), it became obvious that that of the Burmese people had swallowed the Rakhaing identity. The Rakhaing of Cox's Bazar chose the word "Burmese" to identify themselves for two reasons:

- 1) The former name of Myanmar was Burma, the original Arakan Province and therefore the original inhabitants of the Rakhaing.
- 2) In and around many of the plain areas of Bangladesh the Rakhaing people are incorrectly known as "Magh"⁸³ and the Rakhaing of Cox's Bazar prefer to be identified as Burmese rather than Magh.

Once I came to know that more of the Rakhaing people live in Cox's Bazar, I decided to visit Cox's Bazar to investigate the relationship between native radio broadcasts and the Rakhaing people there.

3.2. 2. Tangail and Mymensingh:



Map: 3- Tangail and Chittagong Districts of Bangladesh

The Garo of Bangladeshi origin, mostly live in the greater Mymensingh region, which is the northern part of Bangladesh under Dhaka Division (see box-4). The Garo people also live in Gaibandha⁸⁴, Gazipur⁸⁵ and greater Sylhet Districts⁸⁶. I chose Tangail and Mymensingh as

⁸³ See page 27

⁸⁴ New district from the southern part of Rangpur district started functioning in the year 1984.

⁸⁵ New district from the greater Dhaka district started functioning in the year 1984.

my research areas. I went to Pargacha⁸⁷ (See map- 3) under Madhupur upazilla of Tangail District. The Garo people densely populate this village. There are high schools, churches, hospitals and one cultural centre present in this village. Before visiting this Garo area in Modhupur, I was unaware of the extent of their living areas in Bangladesh. Before my study on this issue I was under the impression that they lived in a total of seven upazillas in Mymensingh, Tangail, Jamalpur and Netrokona only. According to local sources, the Garo people who live in the Bangladesh are only a small part of their total community; the majority of them are living in India (Para 2.4.2.1).

Box-4: - GREATER MYMENSINGH

Tangail became a new district on January 1st 1969 with Patuakhali from the south-western part of Mymensingh. Again in 1981 the north-western part of Mymensingh was separated into another new district named Jamalpur. In 1984, Jamalpur divided into two districts named Jamalpur and Sherpur, Mymensingh divided into three districts named Mymensingh, Netrokona and Kishorgang; Tangail remained same. Now these six districts named Tangail, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Netrokona, Kishorgong and Mymensingh are known as greater Mymensingh.

3.3 WHERE DID I TRAVEL?

I travelled the above-mentioned areas (Para 3.2) of Patuakhali, Barguna, Cox's Bazar, Tangail and Mymensingh as well as the south-eastern part of Bangladesh, normally known as CHT⁸⁸. CHT is officially known as the core area of indigenous people in Bangladesh and recently, two more radio stations were established in this area. Bangladesh Betar, Rangamati was established in 1989, whereas Bangladesh Betar, Bandarban is waiting for its official inauguration. Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong has been covering this area and broadcasting radio programmes for these groups since 1976. The reason I travelled Chittagong, Rangamati and Bandarban (Map-6) was to make a good comparison with my research area and the people living there.

⁸⁶ At present four districts named Sylhet, Sunamgang, Moulvibazar and Hobigang are known as greater Sylhet because these four districts were the subdivision under Sylhet districts till 1984. These four districts constitute the Sylhet division.

⁸⁷ Pargacha is name of the village; this word is a Muslim word. It means Muslims were travelled and lived in this area several years ago. Still there are few Muslim family lived in this village.

⁸⁸ CHT= Chittagong Hill Tracts; at present CHT is divided into three districts Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban.

CHAPTER-4

OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

Abstract: The government took the initiative to start the radio broadcasting programmes for indigenous people in 1976. Artists and performers, both from non-indigenous and indigenous groups, have done a very good job in shaping the programmes. Although further development is still needed, the programmes have proved to be very useful for indigenous people in attaining a sustainable livelihood

When selecting the interviewees, I tried to represent a wide variety of people. Gender, urban or rural background, marital status, age, and educational status have all been taken into consideration. Although it is not a full representation of the nation's indigenous people, it is a good sample. The results of these interviews could also be taken into consideration for future use. The 'Sal Gittal' programme had a lot of positive effects on the sustainable livelihood of the Garo. Contrary to this, the Rakhaing are in danger of losing their cultural identity and heritage, which through an indigenous radio programme, could be helped to sustain.

4.1 Historical Development of Indigenous Radio Programmes.

Indigenous radio programmes began broadcasting at the beginning of the twentieth century when Bangladesh was not yet in existence. Shortly after the independence of Bangladesh in 1976, Bangladesh Betar started indigenous radio programmes from several of its stations. Some of the stories of these beginnings are written below.

4.1.1 Radio and Indigenous Programmes and Their Historical Development⁸⁹.

Dr. Jafar Ahmad Hanafi, Director, Cox's Bazar Cultural Centre and a regular artist on Bangladesh Betar, is one of the many artists who were very much engaged in beginning a programme for indigenous people. I was fortunate enough to interview him during my visit to Cox's Bazar District. He spoke in detail about the beginnings of the indigenous programme, especially in Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong.



Picture-6: Dr. Jafar Ahmad Hanafi
(Photo: Abdul Hoque)

I interviewed him at his office and although I had a tape recorder for recording his interview, like many other problems I experienced, his interview was not properly recorded. I am therefore writing his narrative from memory.

⁸⁹ The history of Paharica programme was written in a booklet published on 28th October 1978. The booklet was about **Tribal Programme of Bangladesh Betar Chittagong**. Importance & area of **Paharica** programme was described in the booklet. The editor of the booklet was Dr. Jafar Ahamad Hanafi.

Jafar Ahmad: - *“As I can remember it was the month of November, 1976. The Regional Director of Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong called me and conferred the task to organize a programme for indigenous people. They gave me a time frame of around 15 days. They gave me all kinds of logistical help like a car and relevant people to assist me. Communications were not as good as they are today. It was a notable event to have the then President of Bangladesh, Ziaur Rahman, officially visit the Rangamati subdivision (at present Rangamati Hill District) of Chittagong Hill Tracts. The indigenous people of CHT, the Jhummah, demanded of the president a radio programme among their many demands. The president made a commitment to them that such a radio programme would be broadcast within the next month. Accordingly, he passed the order to the radio authority. The radio authority chose me as I had studied of one of the major 11 groups of indigenous people in CHT. At that time I had a different job in another organization. The radio authority requested of my organization to be given leave for at least 15 days. Thereafter I began my task; I received the much needed car and fuel to allow me to collect the necessary artists from the indigenous groups. There were no formal artists or singers among these groups; however, I collected some of the people I knew to me from my previous studies. It was very risky to travel to the remotest areas, but we managed it and collected artists we needed to start up the programme. The artists were not familiar with radio equipment and although they felt comfortable with their indigenous instruments, radio did not allow the use of such instruments; after all, radio has its prestige. The radio programme also forced them into a situation of because they had to practice in the Bangla language and the station’s instruments. Many artists lost their voice while trying to cope with radio station instruments; also some of the material they performed lost its traditional sound and became modern. Slowly but surely we managed in succeeding to write the script and organize the programme. Later we named the programme “Paharika”. The programme is now broadcasting in different indigenous languages seven days in a week. A huge number of letters started to come into the station about the programmes. Nowadays it is a lot easier to organize the programmes as lot of artists have begun emerging. I think programme could be more interactive and captivating for the indigenous people”* - Interview end.

The above is a short history of the programme “Paharika” which started on April 6th 1976 in the Bangla language. It turned into a tribal language programme from August 20th 1979. As far as I could understand this was a perspective decision from the president because many parts of the indigenous world at that time started broadcasting in their own languages.

4.1.2 “*Sal Gittal*”; an Historical Programme for the Garo People

Mr. Michael Mritunjoy Rema from the Garo community was chosen along with his colleague Dipok Mrang, to organize this programme. Mr. Rema completed his bachelor degree in music and since 1973 has occasionally participated in radio folk programmes. According to Mr. Rema, the decision was made by the then president of Bangladesh to broadcast a radio programme for the Garo people as the first step in protecting their culture and heritage. Later, he established the Birisiri Cultural Academy in Netrokona District. The Birisiri Cultural Academy is mainly for Garo people and a small portion of Hazong⁹⁰. He informed me about the beginnings of the programme and how tough it was to organize. The Garo people had chosen the name themselves and that nowadays they have the benefit of contributions from a lot of artists, scriptwriters and lyricist. Some lyricists even became nationally recognized figures; Tires Nokrek is one of them (Picture-7). The Garo people are attempting to secure their own private radio channel. The programme ‘*Sal Gittal*’ was broadcast on Sundays in the beginning and was interlinked with Christian prayer time. People don’t want to miss either the programme or church for prayer so the



Picture: 7 -Tires Nokrek⁹¹

government changed the day of broadcast to Fridays. The Garo people had showed expressed their grief over the broadcasting time as the news items had been cut from it without their prior consent. This is an indication of how much the Garo people like and enjoy their programme. The cultural academy in Birisiri, Netrokona has done a lot of research regarding this and help to maintain its running in the proper way.

4.1.3 No Programme for the Rakhaing People in the Radio

When the government organized the indigenous programmes for different indigenous groups in different radio stations in 1976, the Rakhaing group did not manage to secure a programme of their own on Bangladesh Betar Khulna or Dhaka. Even after the establishment of Bangladesh Betar Barisal in 12th June, 1999, they have not yet managed any programme for them.

⁹⁰ Another indigenous group in Mymensingh and Netrokona districts of Bangladesh.

⁹¹ A renowned lyricist and singer among the Garo people. He is taking part in the ‘*Sal Gittal*’ programme of Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka since 1984. Picture collected from the cover page of Daily Janakantha, as on 18.01.06: published from Janakantha Bhaban, 34/a, New Eskaton road, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

My fieldwork indicates that this is due to the lack of proper organization and leadership⁹² among them. Moreover, the cultural academy, which had been established for them and with



other indigenous groups, is now derelict (see picture-8).

In addition, the RDF Chairman⁹³ in an interview expresses a differing point of view (see paragraph 4.1.3.1-2). Part of his reply is given below as I sent a revised questionnaire to him by email in order to learn more about this event, he replied cordially.

Picture: 8- Rakhaing Cultural Institute (wrecked): (Photo: Abdul Hoque)

4.1.3.1 Mr. Ushit Maung:- *In 1976, the late President Ziaur Rahman established cultural academies in some tribal areas such as: Garo Cultural Academy, Mymensingh, Tribal Cultural Academy, Chittagong Hill Tract, Monipuri Cultural Academy, Sylhet, Tribal Cultural Center, Cox's Bazar and Buddhist Cultural Academy, Taltali, Barguna and so on. However, he did not establish any welfare associations apart from the radio programmes Chakma and Marma broadcast from Chittagong radio center once a week for one hour, and also a telecast tribal cultural programme on BTV by the name of "Banoful". The Rakhaing cultural team from Cox's Bazaar participated once only in the programme "Banoful". I did not find any initiatives to protect indigenous languages in the period of President Ziaur Rahman. Even now there is no provision to learn indigenous language in government primary schools in Bangladesh. As the President of the Rakhaing Buddhist Welfare Association, I appealed several times to the authorities to arrange a radio programme for the Rakhaing people. It is not from our ignorance, but from our lack of importance to lack such a programme.*

4.1.3.2 He also added that *'One Buddhist Cultural Academy was established in Taltali during the government of President Ziaur Rahman under Ministry of Home Affairs. However, in some regions those cultural academies are now totally damaged and*

⁹² Immediately after the independence of Bangladesh a repression on Rakhaing community suddenly broke-out in most of the Rakhaing villages in the form of robbery, looting and raping by the local majority, which causes lack of proper organization and leadership.

⁹³ Ushit Maung is the chairman of RDF.

operate no activities. The members of the last sitting Management Committees of the Academy were totally illiterate and the committee was formed in the presence of UNO⁹⁴, Amtali. The Rakhaing community from time to time submitted this allegation to the government authority of "UNO, Amtali upazzila". But, the authority did not take any initiative to find a solution. Regarding these concerns, two groups formed within the Rakhaing people, which initiated conflict. The promotion and preservation of Rakhaing culture and literature lacked local government initiatives to solve the problems to develop an operational cultural academy. The annual budget and government fund to run the program and to repair the academy was nil.

4.1.3.3 He thought it would be useful for the Rakhaing to have a radio programme in their language. He also said that the continuation of the programme was possible as; that *'We are well-equipped and have available artist, lyricists, scriptwriters and performers for continuing the programme'*.

4.2 INTERVIEWEE

While I was in the field, I tried to collect a reasonable amount of empirical data from different areas, people of different indigenous groups with different levels of occupation and social structures. Posters, pictures and other relevant resources have also been collected. Before leaving Norway, I organized a questionnaire that had to be changed three times during my fieldwork. I organized the following graphs and tables according to the results of my final version of my questionnaire. The selections of interviewees were at random and depended on the local guides. I firstly briefed my local sources of the kind of representations I wanted and they tried to select the people according to my brief. Finally, although my interviewees do not represent the proper statistical design, they displayed a representation of the society and the indigenous groups of people. Some descriptions and graphs are given below to show this representation of the interviewees.

4.2.1. Interviewees; as persons

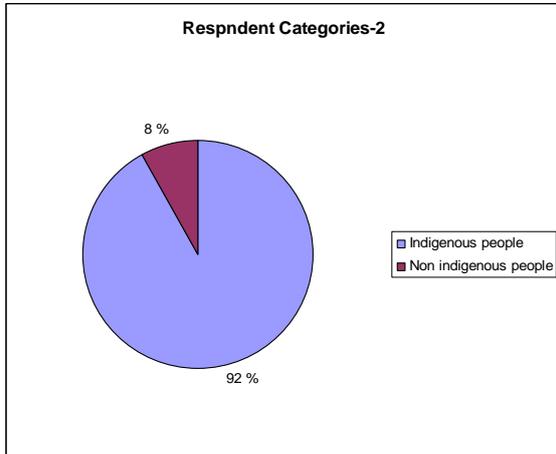
In Bangladesh more than 75%⁹⁵ of the population lives in rural areas and two-thirds of the total population are illiterate. I tried to select my interviewees from mostly rural areas and of those, the indigenous people living in the remotest areas and are almost entirely illiterate.

⁹⁴ UNO= *Upazila Nirabahi Officer*: (Upazila Executive officer; Administrative head of a sub district)

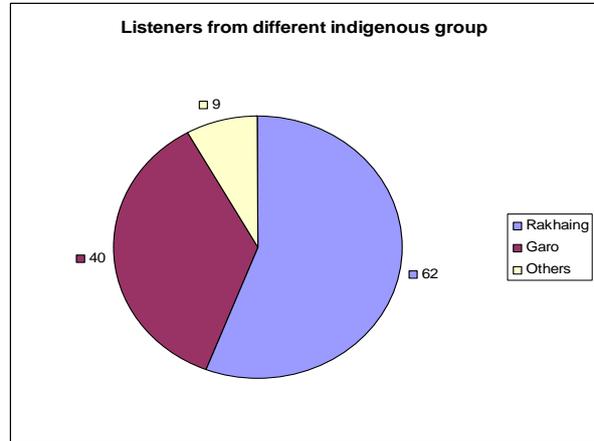
⁹⁵ Statistical pocketbook of Bangladesh 2002;pp-3

4.2.1.1 Respondents

4.2.1.1.1 Indigenous/ Non-indigenous: - Out of a total 137 respondents, 92% (126 people) were indigenous whereas 8% (11 people) were non-indigenous people (Graph-2).



Graph-2. Indigenous and Non-indigenous respondents



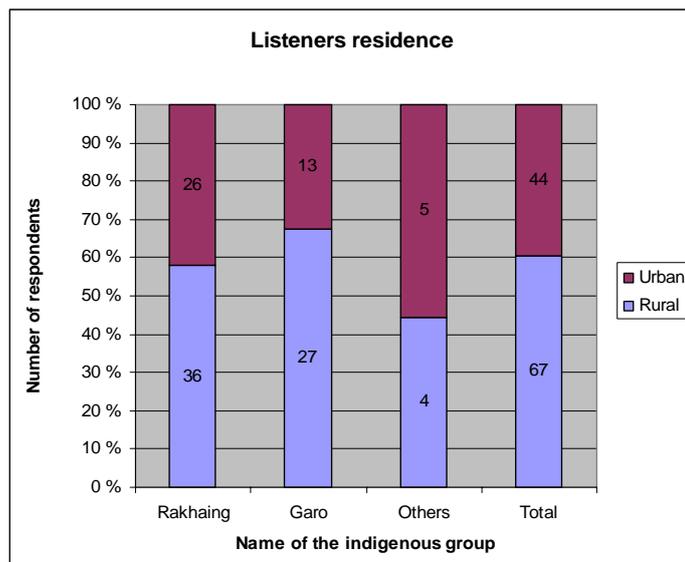
Graph-3: Listeners from different Indigenous group

4.2.1.1.2 Different indigenous group: -

Among the total number of 111 (See paragraph 3.1.1) listeners from different indigenous groups, 62 were Rakhaing from Patuakhali, Barguna and Cox’s Bazar, 40 from Garo and 9 from other indigenous groups⁹⁶ (Graph-3).

4.2.1.2 Residence

Out of 111 respondents, 67 (60%) were from rural areas while 44 (40%) were from urban areas. This does not however, represent their original living status of rural or urban residents. Originally they lived more in rural areas than in urban areas.



Graph-4: Listener’s residence

⁹⁶ The Rakahing and Garo people are the main focus on my research questions but I interviewed indigenous people in Rangamati and Bandarban just to make comparison with Rakaing and Garo. In my study **other groups** represents the indigenous group from **Rangamati and Bandarban**.

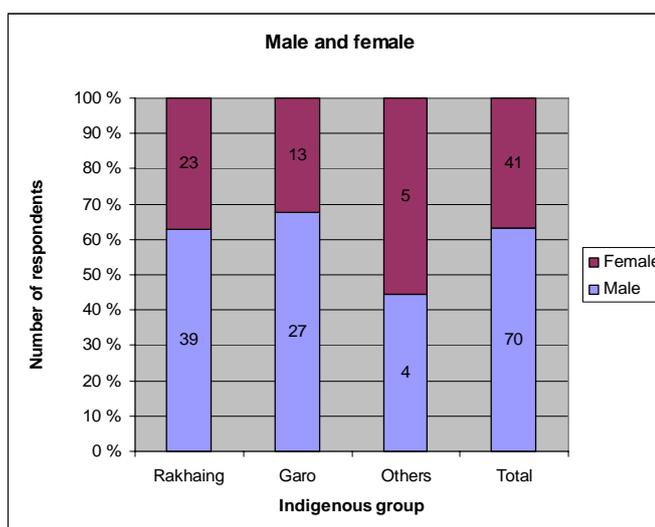
Among the interviewees, Rakhaing and Garo urban people number less than rural people, but for other groups, urban interviewees are higher than those of rural areas. It was almost not possible to reach the remoter areas due to lack of security and trust (Box-5).

Box-5: Why Distrust?

On December 2nd 1997, The PCJSS (Parbatto Chattagram Jano Sanhiti Samity- CHT Peoples Welfare Association) agreed to a peace accord which apparently put an end to a 25 year long civil war with the government and the indigenous resistance movement; this has led to some improvement in law and order. Within the framework of the accord, the CHT Regional Council was envisaged as an apex body with supervisory and coordinating powers over three hill district councils, the CHT development board, the district police force and the district civil administration. The accord also provided for a land commission to address the issue of conflicting land claims and provisions for the withdrawal of the armed forces from the Hill Tracts, with the exception of permanent border control camps. After the signing of the peace accord, much development between indigenous people and the government has been carried out, but there is yet to be done. According to local guides, we still need to be cautious when visiting the rural areas of CHT.

4.2.1.3 Male/ Female

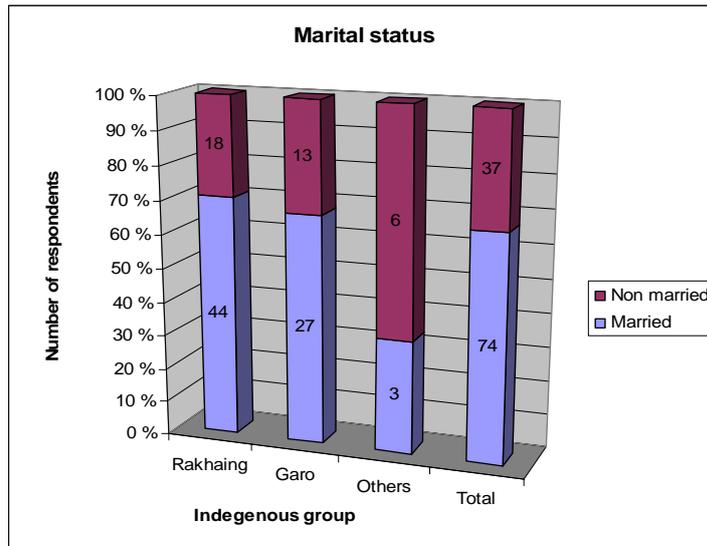
Male respondents number slightly more than female; the total number of females was 41 and males were 70. In many cases, when I was in a house to interview people, I found the men to show more interest than the women who merely observed and were reluctant to be interviewed.



Graph-5: Male and female listeners.

4.2.1.4 Marital status

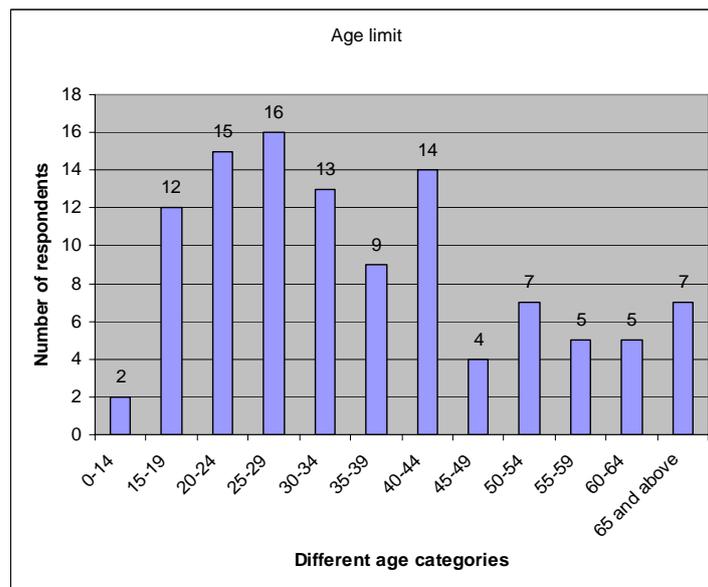
More than double the number of respondents was married. Almost every group was represented the same way. (Graph-6) For other groups, the number of non-married was double that of married. While I was in the field, not everything was in my control and maintaining quality was beyond my capacity.



Graph-6: Marital status of Listeners

4.2.1.5 Age limit

Almost all categories of the age limit have been represented in my interviews. People between 25-29 years of age represent the highest number (16) of respondents, while 0-14 year olds numbered significantly less (only 2). To know the proper distribution of age limit I divided the range into 12 age bands from 0 to 65 plus years old.

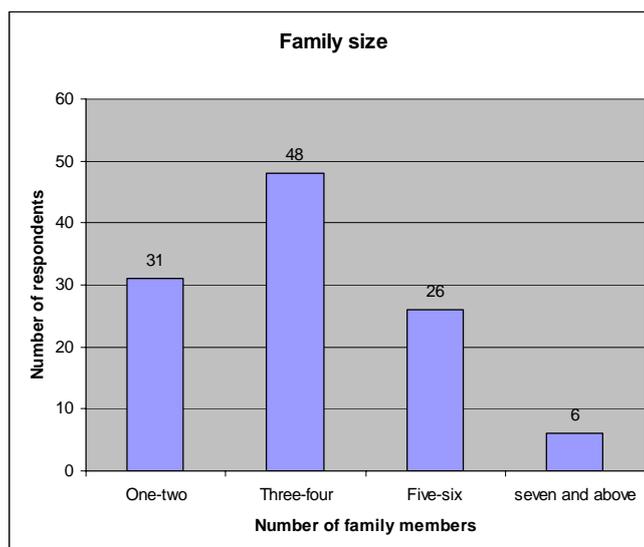


Graph-7: Age limits of Listeners

4.2.1.6 Family size

The maximum number of households (48) consisted of 3-4 persons per family. Few households (6) consisted of more than six members. One question may arise about the number of families (31) consisting of only one or two members while unmarried respondents numbered 37. This was because many unmarried respondents are members of a family consisting of 3-4 or more members (Graph-8).

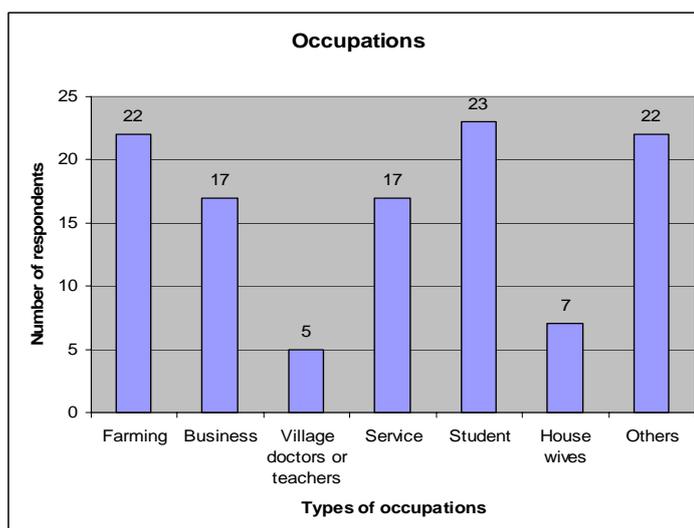
In the context of Bangladesh, the family size of 3-4 is evidence of family planning awareness and communication via radio plays a pioneering role in creating this awareness among the indigenous people.



Graph-8: Family size of Listeners

4.2.1.7 Occupations

Among the respondents, students were the highest (23) of all occupations. Farming and other occupations were the second highest (22). Other occupations included carpenters, fishermen and religious leaders, drivers in the military, weavers and day laborers. Business and service industry were the third highest (17).



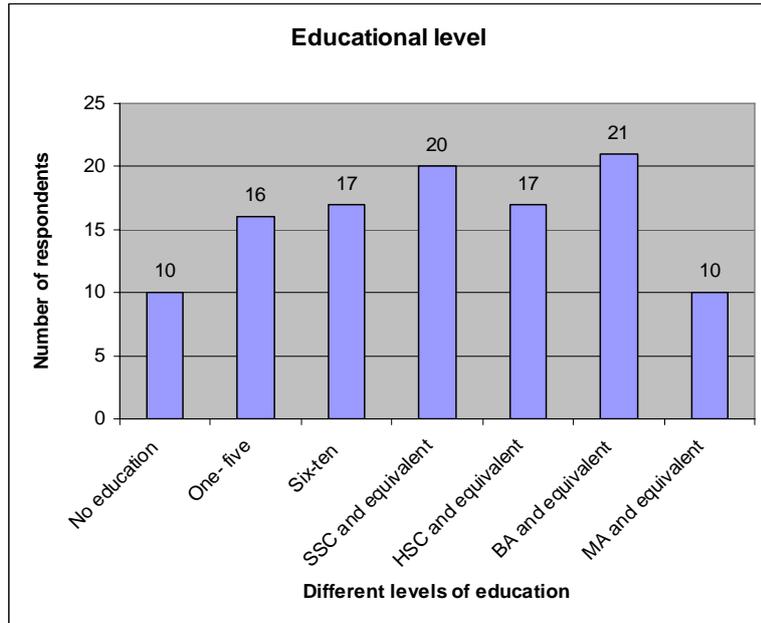
Graph-9: Occupations of Listeners

Seven of them were housewives and five were village doctors and schoolteachers. This spread shows that my respondents covered almost all kinds of occupations

4.2.1.8 Educational level

A good balance of educational levels found amongst the listeners. 10% were highly educated, 20% held bachelor degrees and 8% were illiterate. My interviewees do not represent the indigenous people's literacy status or national education status (Graph-10).

I also found in the Garo people that the percentage of literacy is more than above the national average, whereas it is below that for the Rakhaing people. Among the other groups, Chakma in CHT are more educated than the national average.



Graph-10: Educational level of Listeners

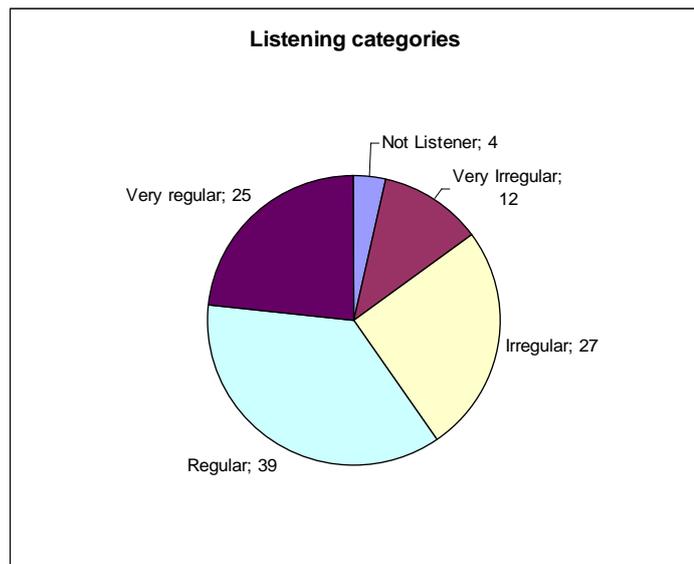
4.2.1.9 Religions

All 62 Rakhaing respondents were Buddhist in religion; while all but one, who was Muslim, were Christian in the Garo respondents. From other groups, eight were Buddhist and one person was Christian. In total, there were 70 Buddhists, 40 Christians and one Muslims.

4.2.2 Interviewee as listeners

4.2.2.1 Listening categories

Almost 96% are listeners of radio, of which 26% are very regular listeners. In the Rakhaing area, almost everyone listens to the radio as they have no other available medium. Some Garo areas have electricity and therefore TV, but they like radio most because of their own programme. The identifications of the terminologies are as follows: *Non-listeners* are those who never listen to the radio.

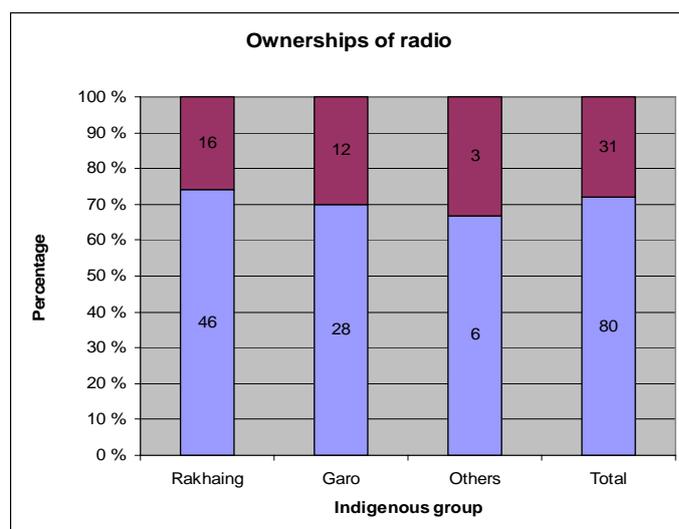


Graph-11: Listeners categories

Very Irregular who listen once in a month. *Irregular* who listen once in a week *Regular* who listen almost everyday and *Very Regular* who listen the radio almost everyday. Even I found some listeners who listen to the radio almost 24 hours a day. On a national level, 71 percent of the rural male and 44 percent of the rural female have the access to radio; whereas access to television is 56.6% and 28.4% respectively⁹⁷.

4.2.2.2 Ownership of Radio

About 72% of the total respondents have their own radio set or at least access to radio in their



home. The Rakhaing people are able to own radio sets as it is cheap, strong, available, portable and cost effective media for them, but the Garo have their own radio sets due to their own programme. From *others* indigenous groups ownership of radio sets is almost double that of non-ownership. The national average of radio set ownership is 30.6% of which only

Graph-12: Ownership of radio 23% are in working order⁹⁸. Therefore, in my research area radio set ownership is tremendously higher than the national average because it is the only medium available to them.

4.2.2.3 Which radio stations are listened to?

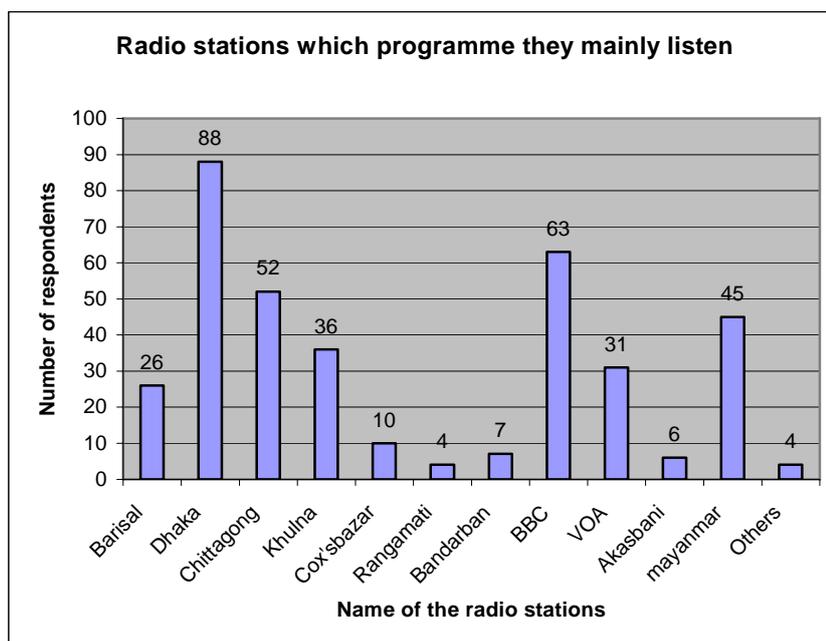
A good number of indigenous people listen to the BBC News (Graph-13). VOA and other international channels are listened to a lot less. For the Rakhaing community, they listen to Dhaka as the national radio programme and Khulna as the regional (Map-5). They also have been listening to programmes from Bangladesh Betar, Barisal since its inauguration in 2000. They are dissatisfied however, as they have no programme of their own. However, many Rakhaing people of Patuakhali, Barguna and Cox's Bazar usually get to hear an indigenous radio programme from Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong; the once a week Rakhaing programme

⁹⁷ Baseline survey; 1999; PP-13-18

⁹⁸ Baseline survey; 1999; PP-10-11.

in *Marma* language is broadcast under the programme ‘Paharika⁹⁹’ (Para-4.4). The Rakhaing and Marma are of the same indigenous people (Para 2.4.1.5).

The Rakhaing people also listen to a Myanmar¹⁰⁰ programme almost everyday as the programme is in their own language and they feel comfortable listening to that programme. It also shows that they still think of themselves as from Myanmar.



Graph-13: Radio stations which programme they listen

I found one village doctor in Taltali, Barguna listening to DW (Deutsche Welle), Garman Radio programme. When I asked him why, he just smiled and told me that ‘*it is very much informative and I enjoy the programme*’.

4.2.2.4 What kind of indigenous programme they listen?

Two out of 62 respondents of Rakhaing people do not listen to radio. Fifty one said they tune in to the ‘Paharika’ programme from Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong. Two tune in to ‘Girisur’ from Rangamati and six nominated other programmes from different stations while two also listen to ‘*Sal Gittal*’ sometimes. Among the Garo, all of them said they listen their own ‘*Sal Gittal*’ programme and seven people also listened other indigenous programmes.

4.2.2.5 Language of the programme they listen to

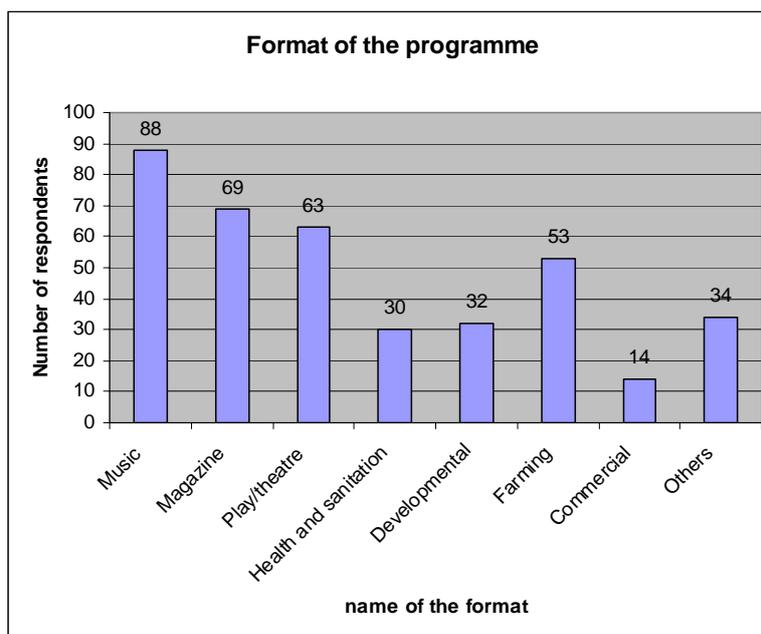
Both Garo and Rakhaing people listen to Bangla language programmes rather than their own language programme, but the Rakhaing listen to the Marma language programme that is the same as the Rakhaing language. *Other* indigenous groups also listen to the Marma, Chakma and Bangla language programmes.

⁹⁹ Indigenous programme broadcast from Chittagong everyday for four different groups alternatively. Wednesday broadcasts marma language for Marma/ Rakhaing people.

¹⁰⁰ Neighbouring country of Bangladesh, Rakhaing people were originated from that country.

4.2.2.6 Programme format

Programmes are broadcasted in different formats to cater for different tastes. Commercial programmes are less interesting to the indigenous people while the musical and magazine programmes are very much liked by them. Plays and dramas are also listened to by because the indigenous groups which they enjoy very much.



Graph-14: Formats of the programmes.

Farming programmes are also popular as they are relevant to their livelihood (graph-14). Some groups are also aware of the health and sanitation programmes along with the developmental programmes.

4.3 ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS¹⁰¹:

With the above-mentioned listeners (Para 4.2), sixteen artists and performers were interviewed; all except one was from an indigenous group. The artists were from Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka (6), Chittagong (5), Rangamati (1), Bandarban (3) and Cox's Bazar (1) stations and represented the indigenous groups of Garo, Rakhaing, Chakma, Marma, Tripura to name a few. These artists perform in the indigenous programmes of *Sal Gittal*, *Paharika*, *Rangasur*, *Girisur* and *Shankho parer gan*¹⁰². They also performed different magazine programmes for the indigenous people broadcasted weekly. The majority of them are from the same indigenous group of people. Out of sixteen artists, one was a lyricist, two were news readers, three only participated in the programme, four were vocal artists and five of them were the presenters of the programmes. Five of them have been involved in the station for six years,

¹⁰¹ The persons who take part in the programme are usually known as artists and performers. They take part in a magazine programme in different ways, some one give the voices, some one works as lyricist, some on as singer and so on. All of them here treated as artists and performer. Bangladesh betar has a contractual system. Some one paid by the government for individual programme, some one contracted for every month and paid for each month. Some one has their permanent job in the radio as artists.

¹⁰² This is an experimental programme broadcast everyday from Bangladesh Betar, Bandarban. Bandarban radio station is waiting for official inauguration. This station is fully core area of indigenous area.

two about ten years, one more than 12 years and six have been working for more than 20 years in radio.

In addition to the questions of the role of indigenous radio, I wanted to know their feelings. They expressed themselves as follows: -

'We do the programme for maintaining the practice of our culture and heritage so that we do not forget it; to protect and promote our own culture and heritage. I do the programme for the development and exploration of our culture.' According to Rema¹⁰³:

'I am responsible for organizing the whole programme including recording, editing and dubbing. I am not a volunteer as I am an employee here. I work for the protection and promotion of our language, culture and heritage. Garo people from different districts like Mymensingh, Netrokona, Serpur and Tangail are taking part in the programme.'

(A) This programme is a national programme for us. I have to rehearse with the artists before recording, as there are no fixed artists from our group to do programme. Problems like low remuneration; low travel cost reimbursement and no arrangement for staying in Dhaka before recording makes them disinterested to do the programme, but they come only for group interest.

(B) Moreover the money we get from the authorities is by cheque and it cannot be collected without bank account. Artists who live in rural areas have no account, or some of them have an account but it takes long time to collect the money from the central bank. Cheques should be open for these artists'.

Another artist from Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong said:

For the last ten years I have been a contractual person, but before this, I was working here voluntarily for more than 30 yrs. I was working for the interest of our people. I prefer my mental satisfaction rather than money. Mental satisfaction cannot be counted by money. Mentally I am so engaged, if they did not give me any money I would still come to do the programme. I get feedback from my groups. I am representing my group in radio; it is of great interest for me. I am working for the development of indigenous culture and heritage above all.

¹⁰³ He is an employee of Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka as a chief producer of radio he is responsible to organize the garo programme 'Sal Gital'. He belongs to the garo community.

4.4 PROGRAMME PRODUCER¹⁰⁴

I have interviewed two officers, one from Bangladesh Betar Chittagong, who was responsible for producing ‘*Paharika*’ and the other from Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka, who was also responsible for producing ‘*Sal Gittal*’. The person from Chittagong has recently been promoted as Deputy Regional Director. *Sal Gittal* broadcast once a week, but ‘*Paharika*’ broadcast daily in different languages; *Chakma* 2 days, *Tripura* 2 days, *Tangchanga* 2 days and *Marma*¹⁰⁵ 1day in a week. Both are magazine programmes. They expressed the role of radio very positively (see Para 4.8.3).

4.5 REGIONAL DIRECTOR¹⁰⁶

Out of 12 regional Regional Directors (RD) only four from Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka, Chittagong, Rangamati and Cox’s Bazar were interviewed. Bangladesh Betar, Dhaka has the weekly ‘*Sal Gittal*’ programme and Chittagong has the daily ‘*Paharika*’ magazine programme. Rangamati and Cox’s Bazar has musical programmes daily and weekly respectively. I did not interview others because those areas were not in my research area. Their expressions are mentioned in Para 4.8.4.

4.6 JOURNALISTS

I interviewed three journalists; Mr. Abdul Hye Sikder and Sanjeeb Drong from Dhaka and Mr. Aminul Islam Bacchu, from Bandarban. Abdul Hye Sikder is the Executive Director of Nazrul Institute (See box-6). As a journalist he is renowned in his field and has written a lot of articles on indigenous issues. Aminul Islam Baccu is the editor of Saptahik Parbattya Citra (Weekly Hilly feature) and General Secretary of the Bandarban press club. He also wrote many articles and features about indigenous issues. (For information on Sanjeeb Drong see Para 4.6.1)

Both mentioned that radio centers broadcasting informative programmes for indigenous people are a very good initiative. For most of the illiterate indigenous people, radio is easiest

¹⁰⁴ **Programme producers** are the officially accountable person for any programme production. Programme’s content, theme and government policy should be checked and taken by them. They have to do the overall planning and executions by the approval of the higher authority. Normally Regional Director approves the programme planning and all of its related cost and expenditures. According to present structure of Bangladesh Betar an Assistant Director is being assigned for this responsibility. Regional Director assigns them for any programme; the assignments used to change frequently as required.

¹⁰⁵ Marma and Rakhaing are same group and same language but differently. See Para 2.4.1.5

¹⁰⁶ Regional Director is the head of a regional station. The overall management of the station is maintained by this position and Government policy should be checked and maintained by this position too. All producers and artists are responsible to him.

medium for their livelihoods. They, the indigenous people, listen to many informative programmes including recreations.

Box-6: Nazrul Institute ¹⁰⁷

Kazi Nazrul Islam is the ‘National Poet of Bangladesh’. Nazrul Institute was established in February 1985 by the government of Bangladesh with a view to keeping alive his memory, studying his life, literature and music as well as conducting research on his overall contribution to Bangladeshi life and society. The Institute is housed in the building popularly known as *Kabi Bhaban*, situated at Road No. 28 (Old), House No. 330-B, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka, Bangladesh, where the poet spent a considerable period of the last phase of his life.

Some important objectives and functions are promoting the study of the works of the poet, collecting his songs and other works from various sources at home and abroad and compiling, preserving and publishing the same, making necessary arrangements for research on, and publication of the literature of the poet, and publicity thereof, organizing conferences, lectures, debates and seminars on matters relating to his music, literature and other areas of his work.

4.6.1 Sanjeeb Drong, Dhaka

Sanjeeb Drong is a renowned journalist working with the renowned daily newspaper ‘Prothom Alo’. He comes from a family of Garo indigenous people in Mymensingh. Now he is also a leader of the Indigenous Movement of Bangladesh, he travels and participates in many national and international seminars and conferences. He is one of the scriptwriters for the indigenous radio programme ‘*Sal Gittal*’. He has written many books and articles including:

1. Adivasi Meye
2. Gonotontro, Sushason o Bangladesher Adivasi
3. Bangladesher Biponno Adivasi
4. Desh hin Manusher Kotha
5. Hundreds of columns on indigenous issues published in the national newspapers, international journals etc.

¹⁰⁷ Nazrul Institute, Organizations, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh retrieved as on 12th April 2006 from <http://www.moca.gov.bd/Organizations.htm#Nazrul>

His articles mainly focus on the following areas of indigenous people's livelihood:

- i) Land rights
- ii) Right to forest and natural resources
- iii) Promotion of culture and languages
- iv) Indigenous knowledge
- v) Movements of indigenous peoples for establishing constitutional recognition and
- vi) Migration to cities

He wrote about the role of radio in the indigenous people's sustainable livelihoods regarding my question, which is stated in Para 4.8.5.3. Concerning the emphasis on radio he mentioned:

'radio programmes are very important for the Garo people. They live in remote areas where there is no electricity. Television cannot reach them. Even so, TV is expensive and the Garo cannot afford it. So, radio has its different role for Garos. It should be developed with more technical and financial support provided for the programme'.

4.7 DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL, BANGLADESH BETAR (programme)¹⁰⁸

Mr. ASMS Apel Mahmood, Deputy Director General (Prog) of Bangladesh Betar. I had a written interview with him on this issue of indigenous programmes in radio. He talked about the importance and challenges of indigenous programmes.

It was a note worthy decision of the then president Shaheed Ziaur Rahman in 1976. The main objective of the programme is to incorporate the tribal people into the mainstream society of Bangladesh, and enhance socio-cultural development of the tribal people of Bangladesh. From the beginning, these programmes had to face a lot of challenges. In the beginning there were some problems like unavailability of artists for the programmes and lack of commitment from the indigenous people to take part in the programmes. Radio has its own way of presenting the programme that could not be fixed with the indigenous people's cultural heritage or practices, all this was a challenge in the past, but now it is running well.

¹⁰⁸ Bangladesh Betar is the government organization; Director General is the head of the organization. There are two Deputy Director General one in programme and another in news section. And Head of engineering section is designated as Chief Engineer. So Deputy Director General (Prog) here is the head of programme section. While I interviewed this post was holding By ASMS Apel Mahmood. His one of the famous song 'Mora Akti Fhul k bachabo bole' gave the background inspiration to the whole nations during independence war of Bangladesh in 1971. He has been awarded Ekuse Podok (2nd highest national award of Bangladesh, where Ekush is related with International Mother Language Day; IMLD, on 21st February each year: which is an event from Bangladesh) in the year 2005. He gave the written interview on this issue of indigenous programme. Audience research survey, done by BBC Bangla service in the year 2006, declared above song as the 7th highest popular song of Bangladesh, due to its role in liberation war (retrieved as on 28th April 2006 from http://www.dailynayadiganta.com/fullnews.asp?News_ID=5149&sec=5.)

He also talked about television and other media in comparison with radio.

Television has its visual effects but we have to think differently regarding how many people can afford television. Electricity is part and parcel of the operation of television and many areas of our country are not covered with electricity. Indigenous people can take the radio with them when they go to work. Some indigenous people (you will find) are used to listening to the radio throughout the whole day and they comment “radio is their only friend”.

I questioned him on the future planning for strengthening this programme for indigenous people. He replied;

Indigenous programmes are the voice of the indigenous people. The world becomes smaller and smaller like a village and in this global village (See box-2) we cannot ignore any group of people. The United Nations observed Indigenous Year and Indigenous Decade which subsequently led to a permanent forum for indigenous people. Bangladesh played a golden role in the language movement as International Mother Language Day (See box-1), observed internationally every year, and had its beginnings with student uprising of Bangladesh. As the pioneer of International Mother Language Day of the world, Bangladesh respects all the languages of the indigenous people of Bangladesh. Indigenous language radio programmes are examples of that. The present government has formed a separate ministry for indigenous people. The very word “minority” has been withdrawn. All people of Bangladesh stand on a single platform. There is no cast or color. At present we broadcast seven hours of indigenous programmes from eleven stations. It should be mentioned that the majority tribe people are living in Chittagong Hill Tracts area, where the government of Bangladesh established two stations (Bangladesh Betar Rangamati and Bandharban), and where the indigenous people are producing their programme in their own ways.

4.8 ROLE OF INDIGENOUS RADIO PROGRAMME IN THEIR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS?

Almost the same open-ended questions were put to the different kinds of interviewees. People answered in their own ways and most of the answers were in the Bangla language. The summary of their replies is as follows: -

4.8.1 Listeners:

The indigenous programme ‘creates interest and increases the acceptability of indigenous culture’; it creates awareness and gives them feelings of being members of the world

community; it explores language, heritage and culture and develops awareness on health and education. Indigenous radio programmes have no alternative for the protection and promotion of language and cultural evolution. They are used to hearing their own news which increases their peace, happiness and joy in their minds. They also shared more about their views; it increases the role of taking part in the national development. Literacy rates also increase because of radio programme. Remote area people gain many benefits from indigenous programmes. It has lot of impact on sustainable livelihood as many places them have no electricity and therefore no television. Some of them said that ‘we send our children to school because of the information from the radio’.

4.8.2 Artists and Performers:

‘Radio programmes have affects on the social, language and cultural development of the indigenous people. Paharia (Hilly) people live in the remotest area, radio is the only and cheapest medium by which to learn about news and events around them, and they are able to enhance their livelihoods, language, culture and heritage. It is very much essential for our people. The programmes are very much helpful in the casual life of indigenous artists too’.

4.8.3 Programme Producer

The indigenous programmes are ‘the cultural attachment to the world with indigenous people and also helps them develop their various livelihoods. One of them added that ‘I think it is an effective programme for the target audience’.

4.8.4 Regional Directors

‘The indigenous programmes are playing a vital role in keeping the culture alive. They result in positive changes of behavior in their livelihoods and changes attitudes for a better life also’. Each of the four regional directors agreed that *‘Community based radio station for tribal people or community development programme will be helpful to them’.*

4.8.5 Journalists

I have presented their opinions separately.

4.8.5.1 Abdul Hye Sikder, Dhaka

‘Our national or state character is to live in a peaceful and harmonized way. Radio and other media broadcast these messages in different formats to make the country peaceful and living worthwhile. Radio is the first in this service. Bangladesh Betar broadcasts its indigenous programme in a cordial and sympathetic way. It is an extraordinary example.

Neighboring India has no formal indigenous radio programmes, but here you find every station has one or more radio programmes run by indigenous people in indigenous languages. We can be proud of this.

4.8.5.2 Aminul Islam Bacchu, Bandarban

'Radio centers broadcasting informative programmes for indigenous people are a very good initiative. Programmes in local dialects become more and more popular. Many indigenous areas have not yet received electricity, even no educational institute been established, therefore, this radio situation can be the only medium for education, health and sanitation'.

4.8.5.3 Sanjeeb Drong, Dhaka

'Radio plays a good role in the life of the Garo people, especially in rural areas. The Garo language, music, stories, histories are reflected in the programme. Another good side is that the Garo are running the programme. Indigenous people often do not have access to information. In this situation, the radio programme, Sal Gittal plays an important role'.

He also mentioned that *'in a 40-minute programme, the producer tries to include informative talks every week¹⁰⁹. The talks include social and economic development, the development of indigenous women, agriculture, promotion of the handloom, horticultural development, indigenous youth leadership, income generation programme, importance of business, education and so on. It has a great impact on Garo life. The rural Garo listen to this programme every week. Sal Gittal does not only include songs, stories or cultural items, but it includes the problems and issues of the Garo people and the challenges they face in their life. They can also learn from the talks and the discussion programmes about economic, social and cultural development.'*

4.8.6 Deputy Director General (Programme)

Radio programmes for indigenous people have a tremendous effect on their sustainable livelihood. This is because the indigenous people are used to living in the remotest areas of Bangladesh where the radio is the only medium to reach them with outside news and information. Newspapers or television has very rare access into those areas. Their lifestyle (like Jhuum cultivation, fishing, woodcutting and others) suits the radio as they can bring it with them when they are working. Radio is able to create awareness of many issues like

¹⁰⁹ At the beginning the programme was 40 minutes but now it is 35 minutes; He mentioned 40 minutes.

education, family planning, health and sanitation, agriculture and so on. In the Garo area, the percentage of those educated has increased. Their health and nutrition ideas and practices have also improved.

4.9 WHICH MEDIUM IS THE MOST IMPORTANT IN THEIR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS?

In this closed questionnaire I mentioned three media to choose from. The media were radio, television and newspapers. Their answers are summarized as follows;

The majority of Rakhaing interviewees expressed “radio is the best friend in the rural life”. Most of them expressed only radio while a few of them mentioned television. Nobody mentions newspaper as playing an effective role in their sustainable livelihood. They mentioned radio as being effective because it contacts them with universal world. They can take their radio sets with them where ever they go. It is low in price, easily portable and, can be listened to when they are working; the radio is always with them. Some Garo people mentioned, “it increases thinking power and opens the mental eye because it talks about us”. Radio plays a special role on farming rather than television or newspapers. One of the Garo people said; ‘the poor have no ability to buy televisions. I believe the use of radio is greater in villages. Radio has more influence in indigenous society as many indigenous people live in rural areas where newspapers seldom reach and television has limited access, so radio is important for indigenous people’, Radio is the closest friend during disasters. Groups other than the Rakhaing and Garo mentioned that when electricity comes, so does television; we live in the rural areas where there is no electricity.

4.10 SUGGESTION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS PROGRAMME

Suggestions have come from both the listeners (indigenous peoples) and the artists.

4.10.1 Listeners

In the questionnaire I included a space for writing any suggestions for the development of indigenous radio programmes. Below is the summery of their answers.

From the Rakhaing people, their first and foremost demand or suggestion was that a Rakhaing programme should be started from the Barisal Radio centre where interviews of experienced people of the indigenous society should be broadcast. They want a weekly indigenous radio programme in their own language like ‘Paharika’ in Chittagong and ‘Sal Gittal’ in Dhaka. They also suggested that the programme should be livelihood oriented and that educational and religious programmes should be incorporated. Rakhaing artists should

be contacted in Bangladesh Betar Barisal. They hope the programme will enhance the exploration of culture, language and heritage. Having their own programme means developing their culture. Scientific programmes in our language will increase their knowledge. They noted that by comparison, the Garo have had their own programme since 1976, and mentioned that time should be increased to two times a week and improve the programme both quantitatively and qualitatively. They demanded that music, Serengji, Ray Ray¹¹⁰ should be increased. They also suggested that realistic and constructive programmes with due suggestions from the community will make the programme livelihood oriented.

4.10.2 Artists and Performers

This open question for artists and performers gave them more incentive to write according to their thinking. The summaries of the answers are as follows: -

A common demand from the artists is that programme time should be increased. Songs with their national (indigenous) instruments were also a common demand for each group of indigenous artists. Old people of the Garo society know lot of folk stories, which should be broadcast. Overall, the programme budget for one year is too low to organize a complete and successful programme. In Rangamati they want a programme in their own language, which will enhance and explore their language, culture and heritage. One person mentioned; 'If the programme runs in our language, artists will be created automatically and in the future national artists will be found here' (Para 5.4). Bangladesh Betar, Chittagong receives lot of letters from neighboring countries, which proves that it has listeners outside of Bangladesh.

4.11. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

In the questionnaire I included space for writing any comments/suggestion about indigenous programmes. Below is the summary of their answers.

Different cultural anniversaries may be broadcast through radio that will enhance knowledge of indigenous culture to all people. At the same time, livelihoods will be developed and sustained. A Rakhaing programme from both Barisal and Cox's Bazar should be started. Some Garo interviewees suggested that radio should come out from the periphery of traditionalism; we should have found new talents. The story telling programme is very much interesting and useful. The suggestion of a review every week of the programme and the need to research and publish was made. It was also suggested that an Indigenous Officer should be appointed to indigenous radio programmes.

¹¹⁰ Local indigenous instrument.

CHAPTER-5

SUMMERY AND CONCLUSION

Abstract: Some financial constraints, like many other countries, hinder the success of the indigenous radio programmes. We don't know if we can overcome this drawback or not. There are many positive outcomes from the indigenous programmes, which could be strengthened by cooperating with other indigenous media throughout the world. Sami radio and indigenous media cooperation could be one such example. Like other indigenous groups in Bangladesh, the Rakhaing group has an obvious right to have their own radio programmes in Bangladesh Betar Barisal and Cox's Bazar.

Finally, using the present infrastructure to build relationships with other indigenous radio programmes and, by coordinating with such programmes of the different radio stations in Bangladesh, the scope of programming, the range of listeners and more vitally, the increased awareness and general knowledge of indigenous groups and the issues surrounding them would significantly broaden overall.

5.1 MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL SYSTEM AFFECTS PROGRAMME PRODUCTION:

Bangladesh Betar is included in the revenue budget of government of Bangladesh. It has some income generating opportunities through commercial advertisements and renting FM transmitters to the BBC and other corporations. This income goes directly into the budget. The total budget comes from the Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of Information. The budget for radio is distributed among the different wings. The Programme Wing distributes the money to the regional stations to cover the cost of programme production, salaries of the staff artists and other official management costs. Over the last ten years, the salaries of the officers and staff at the stations have increased twice; in fact they are now double the original salaries. However, the total amount of the revenue budget has not increased accordingly to meet the salary increments. Therefore, salaries consume the majority of the budget, thus reducing the available funds for programme production. It then becomes necessary to fill the required airtime by re-broadcasting previous programmes. As a result, the possibility of new programme production is significantly reduced. Artists demand more programmes and more money for the production of each programme (See box-7). These same artists also require reimbursement for other costs such as travel; however, instead of meeting these costs, the authorities reduce those of programme production. This situation needs time to change and is also dependent on many factors.

Paharika began in Bangla in 1979 (Para 4.1.1), indigenous groups have come forward to execute and perform their own programmes in their languages. Although there is some development and progress, there is still a lot more to be made.

5.3 SAMI RADIO AND INDIGENOUS MEDIA COOPERATION¹¹³

We, the entire group of Masters' Students of Indigenous Studies at the University of Tromsø, Norway, participated in an excursion tour to Karasjok, in northern Finnmark, Norway, from 3rd–6th April 2005, where the Sami¹¹⁴ Radio Centre is situated. On April 4th, 2005, we visited the radio centre and joined in on a brief session of '*Sami Radio and Indigenous Media Cooperation*' presented by Mona Solbakk and Ravdna Buljo, editors of Sami Broadcasting, Norway. This same paper was developed and presented by Mona Solbakk and Nils Johan Hætta on 26.04.06 to another group of Indigenous Studies students.

To make a comparison of the situation between the indigenous radio programmes of Bangladesh Betar and Sami Radio, some of the information from both power point presentations is given below.

5.3.1 Historical development of Sami Radio:

The first Sami language radio broadcast was on November 8th 1946 on NRK Tromsø. The production of the Sami broadcasts was moved from Tromsø to Karasjok in 1976. NRK started regular television broadcasts in Sami in 1990. Sami Radio became a separate division of NRK in 1992. NRK Sami Radio began daily Sami news broadcast on TV in August 2001.

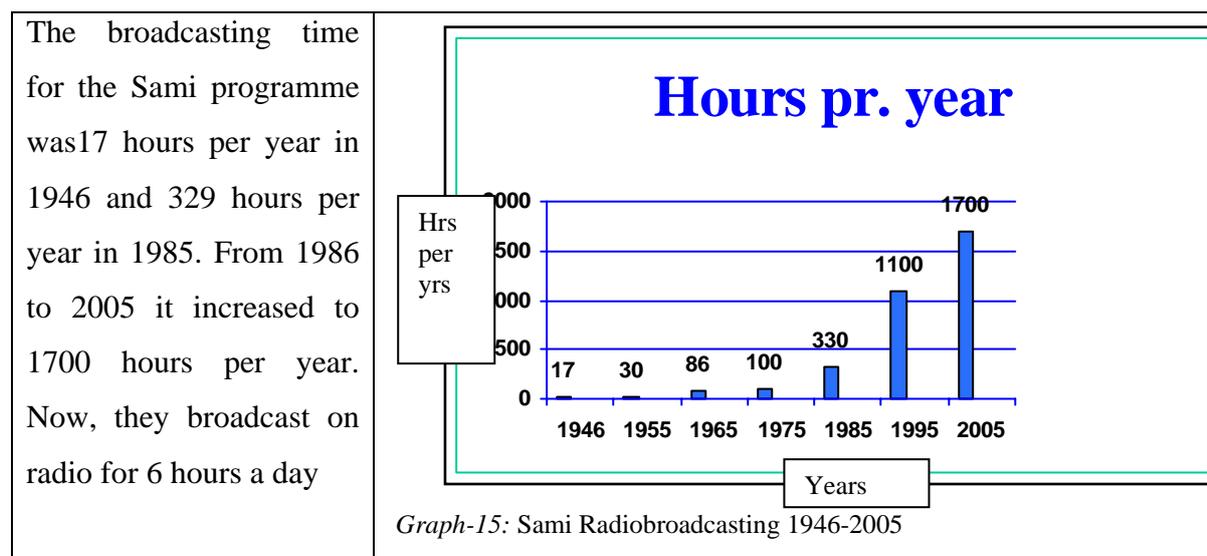
5.3.2 The Production:

Radio programmes are produced mostly in Sami language, but also in Norwegian. Sami News is broadcast daily in Norwegian at 13.30 (5 min). There are also TV programmes, mostly for children, but also political and cultural programmes broadcast in Sami. The daily news for the TV web site in Sami, Norwegian, Swedish and Finnish is updated regularly.

¹¹³ This was a power point presentation about sami radio and indigenous media cooperation during the excursion tour of the students of Masters' programme for indigenous studies, university of Tromso, Norway as on 04.04.2005. I was one of the students in that excursion tour.

¹¹⁴ The *Sami* are considered to be a group of Indigenous Peoples that live in the polar region in what today comprises the Northern area of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. From the South, the traditional *Sami* region extends from femenden in Norway's Hedmark County in Idre in Dalarna, Sweden to the North it stretches to the Kola Peninsula in Russia and down to Finland in the southeast.

5.3.3 Increased time and employees:



Monday - Thursday, 5 hours on Friday and one hour on Saturday and Sunday. Till April 2006 programme schedules are as follows: Daily Radio: 07.00-09.00, 13.30-17.30; Friday: 13.00-18.00; Saturday/Sunday 18.00-19.00.

The programmes broadcasted cater for any taste; youth – elders, culture, documentary, debates, entertainment and so on. The number of employees increased from 6 – 78 within the year's 1976- 2006.

5.3.4 Indigenous media cooperation

Through the sharing of media, the indigenous media cooperation aims to:

- Bring the indigenous world closer together
- Raise global awareness of indigenous people
- Provide a tool to engage and promote indigenous issues.

5.3.5 Connecting the indigenous world

- NRK and Sami Radio have strongly expressed the wish to profile the world's indigenous peoples on radio and television.
- We hope that we can obtain partners so that our experience and resources can contribute to linking the world's indigenous communities in a media network.

Comparing these developments of Sami Radio from 1946 to 2006, to those of the indigenous programmes in Bangladesh, it is noted that Bangladesh is remarkably far behind in development. Moreover, it is reducing its programme production due to lack of available money and support.

5.4 RIGHT FOR AN INDIGENOUS RADIO PROGRAMME FOR THE RAKHAING PEOPLE IS OBVIOUS:

According to the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples; “Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages. They also have the right to equal access to all forms of non-indigenous media. States shall take effective measure that state-owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity”¹¹⁵. On the other hand, a fundamental principle of the state policy of Bangladesh is to; “Adopt measures to conserve the cultural traditions and heritage of the people”¹¹⁶,

Following the above mentioned articles from draft United Nations declaration on rights of indigenous people and Bangladesh constitution, my fieldwork suggests that every community of indigenous people has the right to express, protect and develop their culture and heritage in their own way. But the Rakhaing is missing out on such an opportunity as it has no radio programme in their language and their people are aware of the diminishing of their culture in the future. They believe that if they had a radio programme in their own language, there would be people among them who would be interested in training, performing and finally broadcasting their programme, thus helping to protect and promote their language, heritage and culture.

5.5: CONCLUSION

Sustainable livelihoods of indigenous people are the harmonious lives of indigenous peoples where there are no harmful influences on their traditional livelihoods with nature and at the same time, are in good relations with the whole world. Knowledge of education, health and sanitation is important for maintaining the relation with the world. As indigenous people tend to live in the remotest areas of a country, radio becomes the most important means of communication; in addition, it is the cheap, easily accessible, portable and a captivating media, which can be listened to whenever people are at work. Therefore, it is well recognized as being useful in the sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples. Although there are some limitations and constraints with funding, such radio programmes have a lot of potential for the sustainable livelihoods of the indigenous peoples in Bangladesh. Radio is not only a pioneer in their sustainable livelihoods, but it is also the most effective in this regard. However, it is not the only form of media that helps indigenous people to sustain their livelihoods.

¹¹⁵ Article 17 of Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples.

¹¹⁶ Article 23 of Bangladesh Constitution

Therefore, there is a need for the joint incorporation of all media (television and newspapers). From the nineteenth century, media was used against indigenous people, as they were not involved with media management. However, when indigenous people involve themselves it becomes a tool for the protection and promotion of their language, heritage and culture. Many of the world's indigenous people are managing indigenous media by themselves; the Sami in Norway and the Aborigines in Australia are just two of the many examples. To make more use of media for sustainable livelihoods there needs to be more research on indigenous people and the use of the different media available to them. Thus for the development of the indigenous people especially Rakhaing and Garo more elaborative research of this kind is required in future.

● The End ●

■ SUGGESTIONS AND /OR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Through my field work and studies of indigenous issues at the University of Tromsø, Norway and my personal working experience in radio (Bangladesh Betar), I intended to gain useful and insightful suggestions which could be put to different kinds of peoples, organizations and authorities in different ways to aid in the improvement of indigenous radio broadcasting.

I present these as follows.

A- Radio programme with the present infrastructures and financial status.

A.1 Radio programmes for indigenous people helps to promote indigenous language, culture and heritage. It acts “as good friend” in their daily sustainable livelihoods and is vital in any kind of natural disasters. ‘Like other indigenous groups of people, The Rakhaing should have at least one programme a week in their own language, both on Bangladesh Betar, Barisal and Cox’s Bazar’. In the beginning, the resource base of artists and performers may present a problem, but different organizations like RDF (Rakhaing Development Foundation) can help by supplying artists and performers (Para-4.1.3.3).

A.2 A newly organized (See A.1) Rakhaing programme and the already operating programmes for other indigenous groups could become more informative, educational and protective of their culture, language and heritage by involving more indigenous

people in the broadcasting of oral traditions and the history of their culture more frequently.

A.3 Payment of the artists needs to be increased to encourage interest and incentives for performing on the programme. These performers should at least have basic costs, such as travel expenses, covered to make the experience of performing for and producing the programme worthwhile and satisfying, rather than a financial burden (Para 5.1).

A.4 Discovering new talent should be common activity for the programme every year and incorporated into the programme. Children especially, need to be given opportunities through the indigenous programme.

B- National Broadcasting Authority (Bangladesh Betar), Ministry of Information.

B.1 Bangladesh Betar authority (Radio Broadcasting Authority) could organize a separate directorate like those of the Farm Broadcasting, and Population, Health and Nutrition Broadcasting cells (See annexure-8). The authority could then allocate a relevant amount of money for the broadcasting of programmes every week since re-broadcasting programmes reduces listener interest.

B.2 Priority over the indigenous programmes and the allocation of sufficient funding for these programmes is required so that newly recorded programmes can maintain interest and increase awareness.

C- Non Government Organizations

Many Non-Governmental Organizations that want to help indigenous people to rebuild their language, heritage and culture could allocate money for the development of the indigenous radio programmes, thus giving them greater involvement. They could use the money; to develop the skills of the artists and performers by giving training; to search new talents (Para A.4) from the remotest areas by organizing different cultural programmes which collaborate with the Radio Broadcasting Authority; to give these artists and new talents a chance to perform on the radio programme and give proper travel costs to the performers.

D- Both NGO and Development Partners

Community based radio stations would be a good initiative for indigenous people to protect, sustain, develop and promote their language, heritage and culture (See Para 4.8.4).

E- Indigenous Leaders

I think the indigenous leaders needs to give more and proper attention to use the broadcasting of the programme to help protect and promote their language, heritage and culture. Indigenous leaders need to organize and aware their people to take part in the programme, not to wait for an invitation from the radio stations, but show their interest in advance.

F- Indigenous Leaders' Collaboration with Broadcasting Authority and Development Partners.

Close relations with the *Indigenous Media Cooperation*, as mentioned in Para 5.3.4-5, Sami Radio and similar organizations throughout the world need to be made in order to:

- Bring the indigenous world close together
- Raise global awareness of indigenous people
- Provide a tool to engage and promote indigenous issues.
- Connect the indigenous world by linking the world's indigenous communities in a media network.

Indigenous leaders could be enabled to take the initiative with world indigenous media organizations and discuss with the Radio Authority to expedite a separate directorate.

G- Function of the directorate:

The directorate would not take control, but would coordinate the various radio stations of indigenous programmes. It would make links with other institutions, share and exchange programme ideas and technologies with different world indigenous media organizations or institutions (Para F) for the benefit of the indigenous people. A relation with NRK and Sami Radio could be the beginning of such connections.

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Map-4: Image of the Indigenous peoples in Bangladesh.



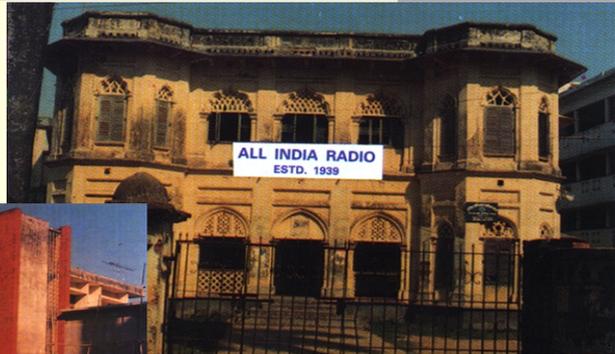


Picture 9: Garo people are listening their programme jointly. (Photo: Abdul Hoque)

Bangladesh Betar

◆ Old

◆(16th desember 1939)



■ Next

(08/02/1960)

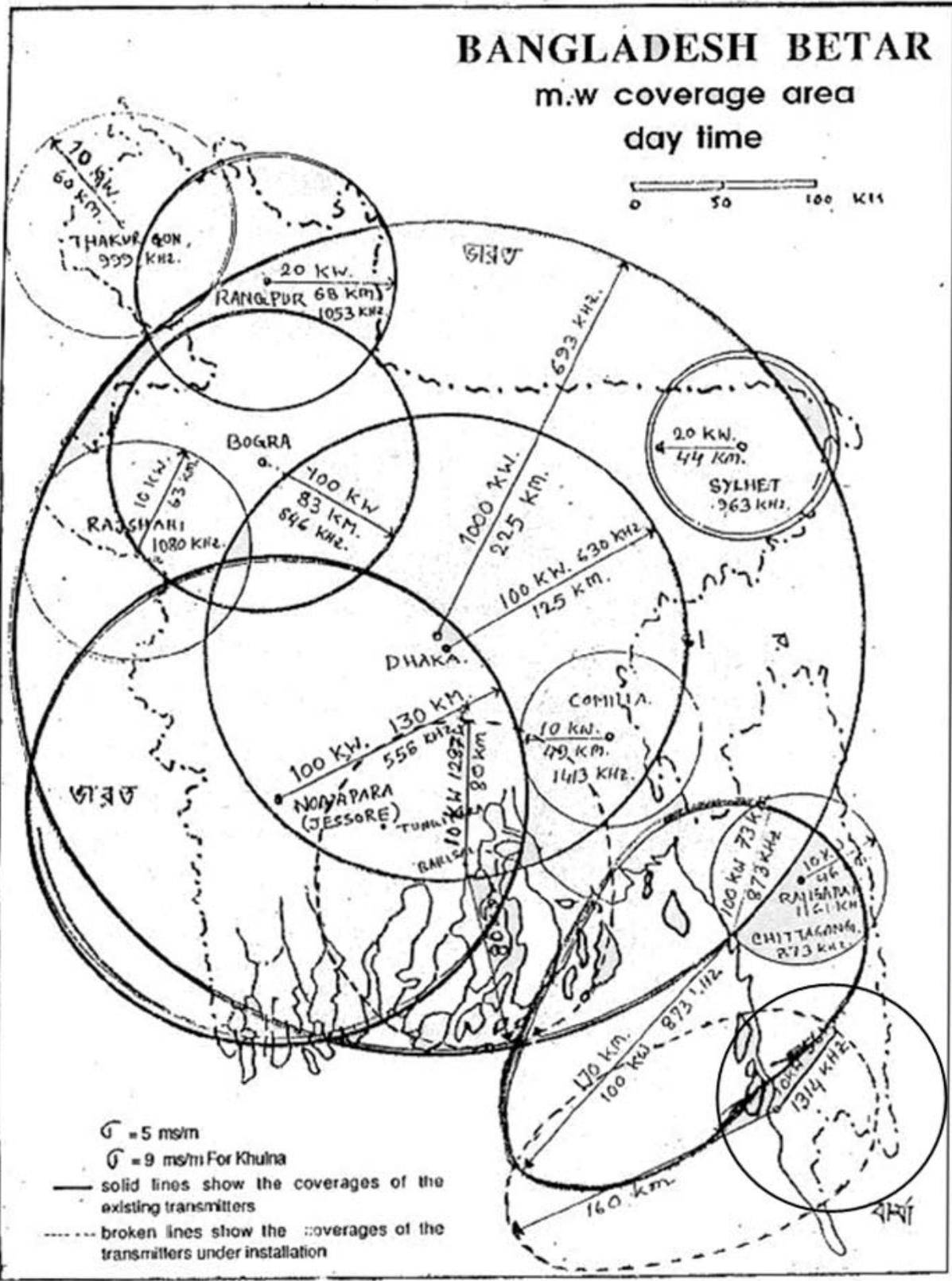


◆ Modern

◆(July 30,
1983)



Picture-10: Radio centers of different times in Bangladesh.



Map-5: Radio coverage area in Bangladesh

❖ Participants observations

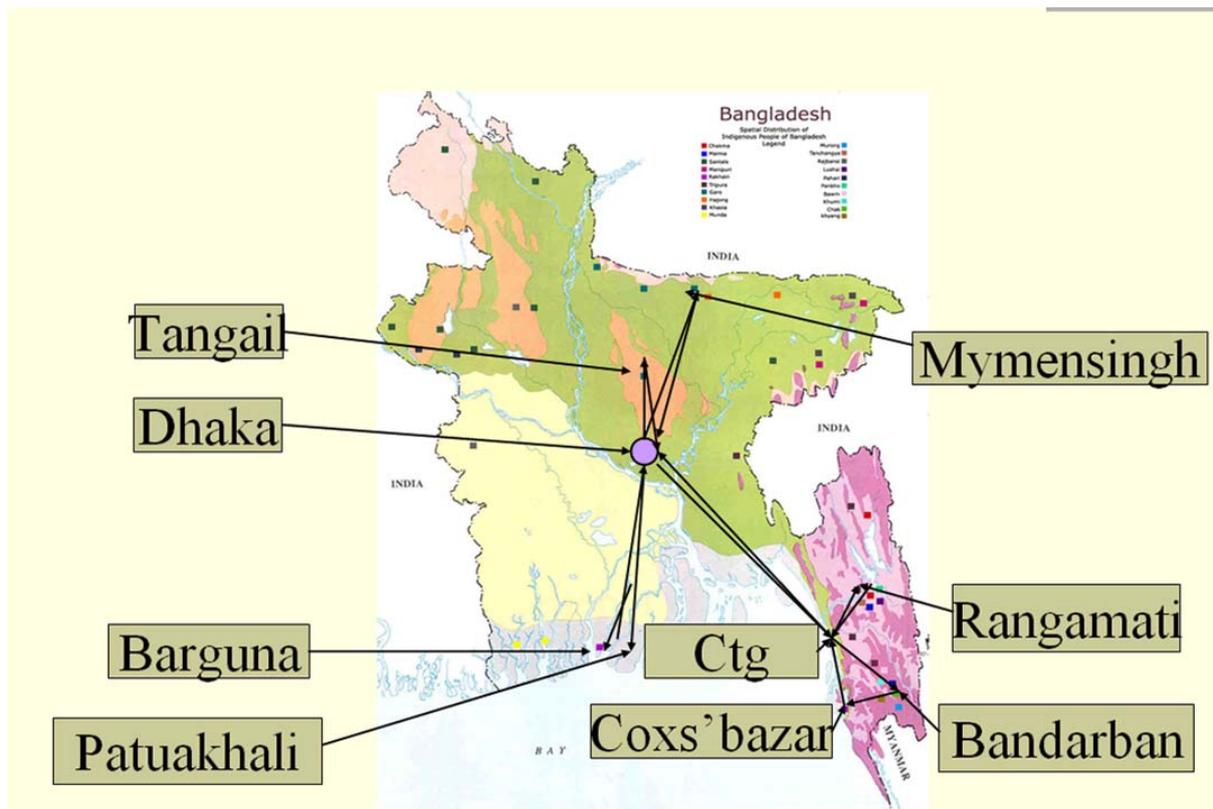
❖ Interviewing

• Oral

• Written



Picture-11 In the field (Participants observations and interviewing people); (Photo: Md. Siddiqur Rahman)



Map-6: The places where I have traveled.

Annexure- 1

Statement by H. E. Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations at the Second Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, New York 21 May 2003

Mr. Chairman,

Warm congratulations are owed to you upon your and your Bureau's skilful stewardship of these proceedings.

Indigenous peoples by definition are original inhabitants of any given territory or country. While ethnic minorities in Bangladesh may not fit this definition, the government has always been sensitive to their problems, according them priority attention.

My purpose of this intervention is to keep this important forum apprised of steps undertaken with regard to the promotion and protection of the varied rights of the tribal communities, including their customs and culture.

While the Bangladesh Constitution guarantees equal rights for all, some special opportunities are offered to the ethnic minorities. These include special quotas in educational institutions and in public services.

Most tribal in Bangladesh live in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area. The Peace Accord signed between the government and representative of the tribal people in 1997 was unique in that it was able to successfully address a problem that had festered for a long time, perhaps too long!

The following have been the progress in the Accord's implementations:

- I. A separate Ministry has been created and has been with a person from tribal community in charge.
- II. The Chittagong Hill District Regional Council and Land Commission have been constituted. The Council has been working in full swing with a Chairman from tribal community. Recently the land Commission Act has been passed and it will be operative soon.
- III. The three Chittagong Hill District Councils have been conferred with more autonomy.

- IV. The government has provided TK. 50,000.00 to each of the listed members of Parbattya Chattagram Jana Shanghati Samity (PCJSS) who were surrendered their arms and ammunition and returned to normal life.
- V. Already 705 tribal people have been appointed to the government services.
- VI. Nearly 65,000 refugees came back to Chittagong Hill Districts. They have been rehabilitated and all benefits under a 20-point package programme have been given to them.
- VII. A Task Force has been working to identify the ways of rehabilitation of Internally Displaced Persons.

The government has taken numerous initiatives for transforming this region into an area of new economic possibilities. It has sought to mainstream the region into the development activities resolving the decade old conflicts prevalent among the various ethnic groups. It is hoped that the desired sustainable development of the hill region would soon be achieved with the help and assistance of all concerned.

We have noted the contents of all of the relevant statements made in this Forum with regard to Chittagong Hill Tracts. We would provide further information to you, Mr. Chairman, in due course upon careful examination of the concerns.

However, it would only be rational to recognise that while much progress has been achieved, naturally more remain to be done. Obviously, major steps have been taken towards what all perceive to be the right direction. The commitment of the government is unflinching. Bangladesh as all the world knows has a vibrant civil society which is encouraged by the government to make their own positive contribution to these efforts. Bangladesh takes prides in her pluralist values. Her people cherish their democratic ideals for which in the past they have struggled so long and so hard. The welfare of all our peoples will forever remain our unshakeable goal.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Annexure-2

This is a questionnaire for the thesis "The role of Radio in indigenous' peoples sustainable livelihood". A dissertation of Masters programme in indigenous studies, University of Tromso, Norway.

Interviewer: Md. Abdul Hoque, Student of Masters programme of Indigenous Studies, University of Tromso, Norway.

Interviewee: DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL, BANGLDESH BETAR

Question1: Bangladesh Betar has been broadcasting radio programme for indigenous peoples since 1976, which is a remarkable decision of the Government of Bangladesh. What kind of challenges Bangladesh Betar had to face during last 29 years to run these programme.

Answer: It was a note worthy decision of the then president Shaheed Ziaur Rahman in 1976. The main objective of the programme is to incorporate the tribal people into the main stream society of Bangladesh. And enhance socio-cultural development of the tribal people of Bangladesh. From the beginning these programmes had to face a lot of challenges. At the beginning there were some problems like unavailability of artists for the programmes and lack of commitment from the indigenous peoples to take part in the programmes. Radio has its own way of presenting the programme that could not fixed with the indigenous peoples cultural heritage or practices which was a challenge for past time but now it is running well.

Question 2: How do the indigenous people have taken these programmes for their sustainable development of their livelihood? Had there been any meetings, discussions etc with them?

Answer: They took it very positively. Some of the organizations from themselves lead to take part in the programmes. According to their voices radio programme for indigenous people has tremendous effect in their sustainable livelihood. This is because the indigenous people use to live in the remotest area of Bangladesh where the Radio is the only medium who can reach them. Newspaper or Television has rare access into those areas. Their lifestyle (like Jum cultivation, fishing, woodcutting or others) suits only with the radio that they can bring with them when they are in the working in the hilly areas. Radio able to create awareness among themselves in many sectors like education, family planning, health and sanitation, agriculture and others.

Question 3: Do you often shared with the indigenous people in planning and execution of the programme? If yes how they have responded?

Answer: Yes we do. They showed their interest to co-operate with us both planning and execution of the programme. In many of our radio stations programme related artists, writers, talkers; singers are come from the same indigenous group.

Question 4: We know indigenous programme specially “Sall Gittal” is a very popular one for the Garo People. Do you think this programme has positive affects in their sustainable development? How these affects reflect in their life?

Answer: Yes it has tremendously positive effects. We find in Garo area that percentage of education has been increased. Their health and nutrition idea and practice has improved.

Question 5: For executions of broadcasting these programme what kinds of problems arose? What kind of co-operation you expect from indigenous groups. Are they cordial and co-operative?

Answer: The only problem is the communication problem. They cordially co-operate with us in every step.

Question 6: Many people emphasis on Television; do you think the Radio has its importance on its own way in the life of indigenous peoples like Rakhahin in Patuakhali and Garo in Mymensingh?

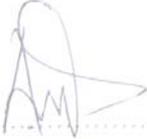
Answer: Television has its visual effects but we have to think in differently as how many peoples can afford television. Electricity is part and parcel for the television and many of the areas of our country are not covered with electricity. Indigenous people can bring the radio when they are in working condition. Some indigenous people (you will find) listen radio programme through out the days and they comment “radio is their only friends”.

Question 7: Do you have any suggestion or plan for strengthening this programme in future to strengthen the voice of indigenous people?

Answer: Indigenous programme is the voice of the indigenous people. The world became smaller and smaller likes only a village of the world. In this global village we can not ignore any group of people. United Nations observed Indigenous Year, Indigenous decade. They constituted United Nations permanent forum for Indigenous People. Bangladesh have a golden role in the language movement. International mother language day observed

internationally every year, which was achieved by the bloodshed of student of Bangladesh. As the pioneer of international Mother language day of the world Bangladesh respect all the languages of indigenous people of Bangladesh. And indigenous programme in radio with their languages are the examples of that. Present government has formed separate ministry for indigenous people. The very word “minority” has been withdrawn. All people of Bangladesh are in a single platform. There is no different cust and color. At present we broadcast seven-hrs indigenous programme from eleven stations. It should be mentioned that majority tribe people are living in Chittagong Hill Tracts area where Government of Bangladesh established two stations (Bangladesh Betar, Rangamati and Bandharban), where the indigenous peoples’ are doing their programme absolutely in their own ways.

I think certainly programme should be strengthening more and more both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Signature: 
 Date: 12.03-2004
 A S M S Apel Mahmood
 Duply Director General (Prog)
 Bangladesh Betar
 Dhaka.

Official seal:

Annexure-3

This is a questioner for the thesis of Masters Programme for Indigenous Studies, University of Tromso, Norway of Mr. Md. Abdul Hoque. Thesis title ‘Sustainable livelihood of indigenous people and Role of Radio as a medium: *A case study of Rakhaing and Garo in Bangladesh*’.

JOURNALISTS

Information:

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Contact: Telephone: 880-2-8122881

Fax: Not applicable

Email: sdrong@bangla.net

Additional information (if any)

Name of features and /or articles you wrote on indigenous issues of Bangladesh: (Please supports it by the documents)

Books

1. Adivasi Meye
2. Gonotontro, Sushason o Bangladesher Adivasi
3. Bangladesher Biponno Adivasi
4. Desh hin Manusher Kotha
5. Hundreds of columns on indigenous issues published in the national news papers, international journals etc.

Question 1: Which area of indigenous People’s livelihood you covered most of your article or feature?

- i) Land rights
- ii) Right to forest and natural resources
- iii) Promotion of culture and languages
- iv) Indigenous knowledge
- v) Movements of indigenous peoples for establishing Constitutional recognition
- vi) Migration to cities

Question 2: Radio programme for the indigenous people is a noteworthy decision of the government of Bangladesh. How do you assess this decision comparing the whole world of information?

Answer: It was a good step by the government to introduce radio programme for Garos in national radio centre. It is playing a good role in the life of Garos, mainly in rural areas. The Garo language, music, stories, histories are reflecting in the programme. And the good side is that the Garos are running the programme. Indigenous peoples have often do not have access to information. In Bangladesh, it is true in their life. In this situation, the radio programme, named Salgittal has an important role.

Question 3: How do you assess the role of Radio in their livelihood?

Answer: In 40 minutes programme, the producer tries to include Radio Talk every week. The talk includes the topic like, social and economic development, indigenous women development, agriculture, promotion of handloom, horticulture development, indigenous youth leadership, income generation programme, importance of business, education etc. It has great impact in Garo life.

Question 4: “Sall Gittal” is a programme broadcast every Friday at 5:10 PM for your people. How do you evaluate this programme for the sustainable livelihood of your Garo people?

Answer: Sal Gittal is a popular radio programme for Garo indigenous people. The rural Garos listen to this programme every week. Sal Gittal does not only include songs, stories or cultural items. But it includes the problems and issues of Garo people, challenges they face in their life. They can also learn from the Talk and Discussion programmes on their economic, social and cultural development.

Question 5: Many people emphasis on Television; do you think the Radio has its importance on its own way in the life of indigenous peoples like Rakhahin in Patuakhali and Garo in Mymensingh?

Answer: Yes, Radio programme is very important for Garo people. They live in remote areas where there is no electricity. Television can not reach them. Even TV is expensive and Garos can not afford it. So, Radio has its different role for Garos. It should be developed and more technical and financial supports should be provided for the programme.

Annexure-4

Questionnaires

- 1. Name** : Ushit Maung
Designation : Chairman, RDF
Present address: 2C/9 Pallabi, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216

Questions about radio programme:

Question1. We know President Ziaur Rahman decided in 1976 to do something for the indigenous people to protect their language, heritage and culture. He established cultural academy and welfare association. The first step was to give a radio programme almost all groups of indigenous people. But I found no programme for the Rakhaing people. Do you thing that it is ignorance not to give important on your group or it was your failure to attract him to do so.

Answer. In 1976 the late President Ziaur Rahman established cultural academies in some tribal areas, such as: Garo Cultural Academy, Mymensingh. Tribal Cultural Academy, Chittagong Hill tract. Monipuri Cultural Academy, Sylhet. Tribal Cultural Center , Cox's Bazar and Buddhist Cultural Academy, Taltali, Barguna etc. but he did not established any welfare associations. But as a part of radio programme, broadcast Chakma and Marma program

from Chittagong radio Center once in a week for one hour, and also telecast tribal cultural programme in BTV in the name of Bonoful. Rakhaing cultural team from Cox's bazar, also participated only once only in Banaful program. I did not find, there was any initiation to protect indigenous language in the President Ziaur Rahman period. Till now there is no any provision to learn indigenous language in government primary schools in Bangladesh. As a president of Rakhaing Buddhist Welfare Association, I appealed several times to the authority to arrange radio programme for the Rakhing people. It is not our Ignorance and not to give importance.

Question 2: President Ziaur Rahman established lot of Cultural academies for the indigenous people, also for the Rakhaing group in Taltali, Barguna. During my field visit at Taltali I found it wrecked. Would you please explain why it became so?

Answer. One Buddhist Cultural Academy was established in Taltali in President Ziaur Rahman period under the special affair's cell, ministry of home affairs. But there are some regions, behind that the cultural academy is now totally damaged and no activities.

- a. Last Management Committee members of the Academy were totally illiterate, formed by the presence of UNO, Amtali.
- b. Rakhaing community people time to time submitted the allegation to the government authority "UNO, Amtali upazila". But, the authority did not take any initiative to make solution.
- c. Regarding these matter two groups has formed within the Rakhaing people, and started conflict.
- d. Lacking local government initiations two make solution and to develop cultural academy for the promotion and preservation of Rakhaing culture and literature.
- e. Annual budget and government fund was totally nil, to run the program and to repair the academy.

Question 3: How do you find importance of radio programme on your own language? Do you think Rakahing people will be benefited with such kind of programme in radio? If yes then who will perform in the programme. Do you have available artists, lyricists, scriptwriters and performers for continuing the programme.

Answer. Yes, we are well-equipped and available artist lyricists, scriptwriters and performers for continuing the programme.

Annexure-5

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Information:

1. Name of the Radio stations; Bangladesh Betar, Rangamati
2. Name of the indigenous group/ groups; Chakma, Makma, Tripura, Tanchanga (G.B.S.N)
3. Name of the programmes for that/those group/Groups; ১৫১০, ১৫১০
4. Programmes formats; (magazine/ interview based/ group discussion or other
Music, Drama, Play, Play-let, Song, jingle,
5. Type of broadcast; (Daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly or often); Daily
6. Duration of the programmes; 1.5 - 3.0 min.
7. Time of broadcast; 1:30 - 3:15, 3:35
8. Broadcast started 16 May 1998 yr.
9. Participants of the programme are from indigenous group or other groups. Indigenous group
10. Artists, singer, scriptwriters are from the same group or not. Same group
11. Language of the programme; Indigenous group
12. Contents of the programme; Health, Sanitation, Farming, Cultural heritage, History

Questions 1:

Who made the plan and execute the programmes. Prog. Producer made the

Questions 2: planning

What kinds of affects of the programme in their sustainable livelihood? Change of attitude

Question 3: for better life.

Do you have any feedback or research on this programme regionally (Document please)?

Question 5: Listeners letters

Do you think this programme should be strengthening both quantitatively and qualitatively? qualitatively

Question 6:

certainly

Do you have any suggestion or any other comments? Improvement of quality of Artists & script writers is very much needed.

(11) Community broadcast should be strengthen

(11) Listeners research should ~~perform~~ be conducted.

20/07/05

Annexure-7/1

গবেষণা প্রশ্নপত্রঃ

(৪) 7/3

মোঃ আবদুল হক, উপ আঞ্চলিক পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ বেতার, ঢাকা এর গবেষণা কর্ম "Role of Radio in Indigenous Peoples' sustainable livelihood" এর জন্য প্রশ্নপত্রঃ

Masters programme in Indigenous Studies, University of Tromsø, Norway.

ক্রমিক বিবরণ তারিখ: ২৬/৬/০৫ই:

নং

০১ নামঃ সাদাত চি

০২ পিতার/মাতার/ স্বামীর/স্বস্ত্রীর নামঃ শ্রী জগদীশচন্দ্র গুপ্তা

০৩ ঠিকানা

গামাঃ (গাজীপুর জেলা) ডাকঘরঃ হুসেইন হুসেইন ইউনিয়নঃ গুলশান-১

উপজেলাঃ কল্যাণপুর জিলাঃ পটুয়াখালী

০৪. বৈবাহিক অবস্থাঃ প্রথম স্ত্রী

০৫. পরিবারের সদস্য সংখ্যাঃ ৪ জন

০৬. বয়সঃ ৫৩

ক) ০-১৪	খ) ১৫-২৯	✓ গ) ৩০-৪৪	ঘ) ৪৫-৬৯
খ) ১৫-১৯	ঙ) ৩০-৩৪	জ) ৪৫-৪৯	চ) ৫০-৫৪
গ) ২০-২৪	চ) ৩৫-৩৯	ঝ) ৪০-৪৪	ট) ৬৪ এর উপরে

০৭. শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতাঃ

ক) নিরক্ষর ঘ) মাধ্যমিক ও সমমান ত) স্নাতকোত্তর ও সমমান

খ) প্রাথমিক ১-৫ শ্রেণী ✓ গ) উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক ও সমমান

গ) জুনিয়র ৬-১০ চ) স্নাতক ও সমমান

০৮. পেশাঃ

✓ কৃষিজীবী	ব্যবসায়ী	শিক্ষক
বেকার	দিনমজুর	চাকুরীজীবী
ছাত্র	পৃথিবী	অন্যান্য

০৯. ধর্ম

ইসলাম	হিন্দু	বুদ্বান
✓ বৌদ্ধ	অন্যান্য	

Annexure-7/2

শ্রোতা সংক্রান্ত তথ্য

০১. আপনি কি ধরনের শ্রোতা

শ্রোতা নই	খুবই অনিয়মিত শ্রোতা (মাসে ১ দিন)	অনিয়মিত শ্রোতা (সপ্তাহে অন্তত ১ দিন)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> নিয়মিত শ্রোতা (প্রায় প্রতিদিন)	খুবই নিয়মিত শ্রোতা (প্রতিদিন)	

০২. আপনার বাড়িতে কি কোনো আছে নাই
রেডিও সেট আছে ?

০৩. আপনি কোন কেন্দ্রের অনুষ্ঠান শুনে থাকেন ?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ঝরিশাল	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ঢাকা	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> খুলনা
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> চট্টগ্রাম	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> কক্সবাজার	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> বাঙ্গলারান
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> হিরিনিসি	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> উয়েল অব আমেরিকা	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> আকাশবাণী
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> মায়ানমার	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ভিয়েতনাম	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> হংকং
চায়না	অন্যান্য	

০৪. আদিবাসীদের জন্য প্রচারিত অনুষ্ঠান কী কী আপনি শোনেন ?

গালগিপ্রাণ	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> প্রহাড়িকা	গিরিসূত্র
অন্যান্য		

০৫. অনুষ্ঠানের ভাষার নাম কি ?

বাংলা	ইংরেজী	গাঢ়া
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> প্রবাহন	অন্যান্য	

০৬. আদিবাসী অনুষ্ঠানের কোন ধরনের অনুষ্ঠান আপনি শুনেন ?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> সংগীত	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> মঙ্গলগাজিন	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> স্টাটক
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> কৃষি বিষয়ক	মহিলা ও শিশু বিষয়ক	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> জনসংখ্যা ও পুষ্টি
উন্নয়নমূলক	বানিজ্যিক	অন্যান্য

০৭. আদিবাসী অনুষ্ঠান আদিবাসীদের দৈনন্দিন জীবনে কী ধরনের ভূমিকা রাখে ?

আদিবাসীরা তাদের জীবনযাত্রার অনেক দিকই অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে শেখতে পারে।
আদিবাসীরা তাদের জীবনযাত্রার অনেক দিকই অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে শেখতে পারে।
আদিবাসীরা তাদের জীবনযাত্রার অনেক দিকই অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে শেখতে পারে।
আদিবাসীরা তাদের জীবনযাত্রার অনেক দিকই অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে শেখতে পারে।

০৮. র‍্যাডিও/টেলিভিশন/ সংবাদপত্র এর মতো দৈনন্দিন জীবনে কার অবদান বেশী এবং কেন?

০৯. আদিবাসী অনুষ্ঠানের মান উন্নয়নের আপনার মতামত/ পরামর্শ (যদি থাকে)

যদি পরিষ্কারে সংস্কৃত ভাষায় কর্মসূচি চিঠির হলে
সংস্কৃত ভাষায় চিঠির বিষয়ে সংস্কৃত পুনঃসংস্করণে ভাষায় হলে
কার হলে সংস্কৃত বিষয়ে।

১০. আদিবাসী ভাষায় কয়েকটি শব্দ বাংলা/ইংরেজী অনুবাদ সহ বর্ণন/প্রিয়ন?

চাঁচা - চাচা
মাগান - গান
গোময় - ময়

১১. যেকোনো মন্তব্য/পরামর্শ (যদি থাকে)

যদি পরিষ্কারে সংস্কৃত ভাষায় কর্মসূচি চিঠির হলে ভাষায়
সংস্কৃত ভাষায় চিঠির বিষয়ে সংস্কৃত পুনঃসংস্করণে ভাষায় হলে
কার হলে সংস্কৃত বিষয়ে হলে সংস্কৃত পুনঃসংস্করণে ভাষায়
সংস্কৃত

আপনার মতামত প্রদানের জন্য বাংলাদেশ বেতার এবং University of Tromsø, Norway এর পক্ষ থেকে আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ জানাচ্ছি।

Annexure-8

A brief description of different radio stations and programme units of Bangladesh Betar.

Table- Annex-1: List of radio stations with their establishment year¹:

Sl. No.	Name of the Stations/ Wing	Year of Established	Year of Broadcasting	Type of Broadcast- ing	Listener groups	Comments
01	Liaison and Audience Research	1976	-		To collect the feedback from the Listeners and maintain Liaison with other wing of BB and Government	
02	Music Directorate	1972	Since beginning of Bangladesh Betar	-	All groups of people	-
03	Betar Prokashana Daptar (Betar Publication Office)	1972	-	-	-	-
04	Transcription Service	October 1972	17.10.72	-	-	-
05.	Commercial Service	May 1967	16.05.67	-	-	-
06.	Farm Broadcasting Unit	December 1973	01.12.73	-	Rural people (specially farmer) all over Bangladesh	-
07.	Population, Health & Nutrition Cell:	01.07.1975	01.07.1975	-	All kinds of listener (especially young generation)	To motivate people in favor of building small family
08	External Service	1972	20.11.1969	-	Bangladeshi people living abroad	-
09	BB, Dhaka	Desember 1939	16.12.39	30.07.83 From NBH ²	All over Bangladesh and Dhaka Region	-
10.	BB, Chittagong	March 1963	01.03.1963 From Relay stations	27.10.64 From NBH	CHT Region	-
11	BB, Rajshahi	July 1954	July 1954 From Relay stations	25.12.1964 From NBH	Rajshahi Region	-
12	BB, Khulna	Desember 1970	04.12.1970 From Relay stations	01.07.79 From NBH	Khulna Region	-
13	BB, Rangpur	November 1967	16.11.1967 From Relay stations	14.04.85 From NBH	Rangpur Region	-

¹ Radio Bangladesh; *Tattho patraw* (Information Booklet): pp 9-51

² NBH= National Broadcasting House

14	BB, Sylhet	October 1967	27.10.1967 From Relay stations	08.03.1980 From NBH	Sylhet Region	-
15.	BB, Thakurgaon	11.11.1988	Since 1988 Broadcasting as relay stations	From NBH	Dinajpur Region	-
16	BB, Rangamati	July 1954	July 1954 From Relay stations	25.12.64 From NBH	Rajshahi Region	-
17	BB, Barisal	12.06.1999	-	12.06.00 From NBH	Barisal Region (Specially coastal areas)	-
18	BB, Cox's Bazar	July 1954	-		Coastal Region	-
19	BB, Bandarban	2002	-	Experimentally broadcasting	Bandarban area	-
20	BB, Comilla	16.08.1988	1988 Broadcasting as relay stations	Relaying From BB, Dhaka	Rajshahi Region	-

A brief description of different units under the Programme Wing of Bangladesh Betar.³

a. Commercial service: The Commercial Service of Bangladesh Betar broadcasts programmes designed primarily to earn profit from advertising revenues. Commercial advertisements, film songs and different attractive musical programmes are produced here in keeping with the objective of Bangladesh Betar. The total broadcast hour of such programmes from all stations is 16 hours 55 minutes per day.

b. Transcription Service: The primary function of this service is to function as archive of Bangladesh Betar. In addition to preserving significant radio programmes, this unit produces a number of remarkable programmes. Here production of programmes is oriented with a view to achieving, five goals- archiving, and broadcasting, distributing, participating in competition and producing community-based programmes. Transcription service collects, preserves and makes use of programme materials closely adherent to our cultural heritage like folk songs, interviews renowned personalities and so on. Under the newly developed system of "The Digital Archive Project" those materials are being preserved here in CD-ROMS instead of magnetic tapes. The programmes produced by the brilliant programme producers of this unit have received international acclamation several times.

³ <http://www.bangladeshlive.net/979295.html>

c. Farm Broadcast: Farm broadcast has a long history from the beginning of radio Bangladesh. It took different title in different times, like Gramer kotha (Talk of the villages) in 1939, Amar desh (My country) in 1947, Buniadi Ganotanter Asor in 1958, Khete khamere (In the Agricultural field) in 1966 and finally Desh Amar Mati Amar (My Country My Soil) since 1973. It is a very popular programme to the rural people of Bangladesh and broadcast jointly from every stations of Bangladesh Betar. Beside this national programme every stations has its own local programme for farming people. The target audience of this unit is the persons engaged in the agriculture sector of our country. In Bangladesh, an agro based country; this sector contributes greatly to the overall development. Under this unit all sorts of information and consultations relating to agricultural activities are being disseminated. The total broadcast hour of such programmes from Bangladesh Betar is 302 minutes (in average) per day from all stations. A brief of farm broadcast programme broadcast everyday is given below;

Table- Annex-2: Farm broadcasting programme form different stations:

Sl No	Name of the stations	Name of the programme	Broadcasting time of the programme	Total broadcast (Evryday)	Remarks
01	BB, Dhaka	Desh Amar Mati Amar (My country My Soil)	19.05-19.30	25 minutes	National programme broadcast from every Radio centers.
		Sonali Fasal (Golden crops)	18.05-18.35	30 minutes	Regional Programme
		Krisi Samacher (Agricultural Buletin)	6.25-6.30 (Summer) 6.55-07.00 (Winter)	5 minutes	Regional Programme
02	BB, Chittagong	Krishi Khamar (Agricultural field)	18.10-18.50	40 minutes	Regional Programme
		Krisi Kotha (Agricultural Buletin)	6.25-6.30 (Summer) 6.55-07.00 (Winter)	5 minutes	Regional Programme
03	BB, Khulna	Chasabad (Ploughing)	18.10-18.40	40 minutes	Regional Programme
		Krisi Samacher (Agricultural Buletin)	6.25-6.30 (Summer) 6.55-07.00 (Winter)	5 minutes	Regional Programme
04	BB, Rajshahi	Sabuj Bangla (Green Bangla))	18.05-18.45	40 minutes	Regional Programme

		Kshet Khamar Samacher (Agricultural Buletin)	6.25-6.30 (Summer) 6.55-07.00 (Winter)	5 minutes	Regional Programme
05	BB, Rangpur	Kshete Khamere (In the agricultural field)	18.05-18.35	30 minutes	Regional Programme
		Ajker Krishi (Todays Agriculture)	6.25-6.30 (Summer) 6.55-07.00 (Winter)	5 minutes	Regional Programme
06	BB, Sylhet	Shamol Sylhet (Green Sylhet)	18.05-18.45	40 minutes	Regional Programme
		Krisi Samacher (Agricultural Buletin)	6.25-6.30 (Summer) 6.55-07.00 (Winter)	5 minutes	Regional Programme
07	BB, Barisal	Krishi Kotha (Agricultural talks)	15.15-15.25	10 minutes (Except Wednesday and Saterdag)	Regional Programme
08	BB, Thakugaon	Kisan Mati Desh (Farmer, Soil and Country)	18.05-18.45	20 minutes (Mon, Wednesday and Saturday)	Regional Programme
09	BB, Rangamati	Khamar Bari (Farming House)	15.05-15.15	10 minutes	Regional Programme
10	BB, Cox'sBazar	Sonali Prantor (Golden field)	15.40-15.45	5 minutes (Tuesday and Thursday)	Regional Programme

d. Population, Health & Nutrition Cell: The objectives of all programmes produced by this unit of Bangladesh Betar are resisting child-marriage, building up public opinion for getting married at a reasonable age, motivating people in favor of small family, eradicating all forms of superstitions, ensuring proper maternal and child care to control death rate of children and pregnant women, disseminating basic facts about health and nutrition. Per day Population, Health and Nutrition Cell are broadcasting 370 minutes of programmes through all the stations. A brief of the programme broadcast by the cell everyday is given overleaf.

Table- Annex-3: Programme of Population, Health & Nutrition Cell from different station⁴s:

Sl No	Name of the stations	Name of the programme	Broadcasting time of the programme	Total broadcast (Evryday)
01	Bangladesh Betar (BB), Dhaka (National)	Sukher Thikana (Existence of happiness)	07.25-07.30	5 minutes (National)
		Sukhi Sangsar (A Happy family)	20.10-20.30	20 minutes (National)
02	BB, Dhaka (Regional)	Swastha I sokol sukher mool (Health is root of all happiness)	11.30-12.00	30 minutes
		Eso Gari Chot paribar (let us build a small family)	15.05-15.45	40 minutes
		Eso Gari Sukher Ghar (let us build a happy family)	22.00-22.15	15 minutes
		Jano Jibon (Peoples' life) (Only Friday)	20.05-20.20	15 minutes
03	BB, Chittagong	Sonali Prottasa (Golden Desire)	15.05-15.30	25 Minutes
04	BB, Rajshahi	Sukhi Paribar (A Happy family)	15.05-15.30	25 Minutes
05	BB, Khulna	Choto Paribar (A Small Family)	15.05-15.30	25 Minutes
06	BB, Sylhet	Sukher Neer (A Happy Nest)	15.05-15.30	25 Minutes
07	BB, Rangpur	Sukhi Jibon (A Happy Life)	15.05-15.30	25 Minutes
08	BB, Barisal	Choto Paribar (A Small Family) Tues, Thurs, Sat and Sunday	15.35-15.50	15 Minutes
09	BB, Rangamati	Sukher Sandhanay (A Quest of Happyness)	14.35-14.45	10 Minutes
	Total Broadcasting Time	National	150 minutes	
		Regional	225 minutes	
		6 hr 15 minutes	375 minutes	

e. Liaison and Audience Research Sub-Unit: Main functions of the liaison and Audience Research sub-unit is to run audience research, to maintain liaison with foreign and domestic bodies on behalf of Bangladesh Betar, to help the Director General of Betar to review and give suggestion as and when required about any cultural pact signed or to be signed by our government. Besides this sub-unit also arranges training programmes and does everything required to send the employees of Bangladesh Betar for training both at home and abroad.

f. External Services: External Services of Bangladesh Betar broadcasts programme in six languages (Bangla, English, Urdu, Hindi, Nepal and Arabic) in nine transmissions for the listeners in foreign countries. The total duration of broadcast is 5 hours and 30 minutes per day. Its programme is projected to our country - its history, culture, tradition etc and international events relating to universal fraternity.

⁴ Evaluation of the Impact of the programmes of Population planning cell, Bangladesh Betar; pp-71